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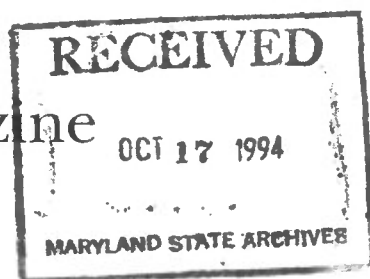
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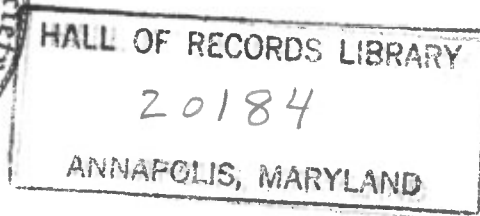
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Editor's Corner:

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 established the Fair Employment Practices Commission and made equal opportunity and equality in public accommodations the law of the land. Few of us who were old enough thirty years ago to read a newspaper or watch television can forget the moral suasion and often violent reaction that went before this example of landmark legislation—whose promises we struggle to keep even today. This issue of the magazine, another Maryland Historical Society sesquicentennial special, explores what one might well describe as the most important theme in Maryland's post-World War II experience—the civil rights revolution—and the larger, tangled issue of race relations in the state's history.

Cover design: The finale of Easter Monday's March for Baltimore came on 31 March 1964, when thousands of civil rights demonstrators reached City Hall Plaza to hear national freedom leaders speak on the need for renewed efforts to achieve total democracy. The demonstrators had marched twenty-four blocks through downtown in thirty-degree temperature. (*Afro-American Newspaper Archives.*)

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CORE pickets at a Baltimore swimming club (Five Oaks) in August, 1963. Eight persons were arrested during the two-day demonstrations, which involved several clubs. From left, Phyllis Randall, Ernestine Boston, and Delores Jones, public relations director of Baltimore County CORE. (*Afro-American Newspaper Archives.*)

“We Shall Overcome, Someday”: The Equal Rights Movement in Baltimore 1935–1942

SANDY M. SHOEMAKER

I'm somewhat amused when I hear young people of today speak about the fact that their parents did nothing to help fight our cause. Then I have to go through reviewing to them the things that were done and the people who were responsible for this kind of action.

Evelyn Burrell, 1976¹

For most people, the civil rights movement in the United States conjures up images of sit-ins, protests, and marches by students and activists throughout the country during the 1960s. Long before these activities became prevalent, however, many courageous people launched attacks on Jim Crow and—despite immense obstacles—made progress toward equality. “There are many people,” as Clarence Mitchell, a reporter and civil rights activist in Baltimore, has noted, “who think that street rallies, picket lines and other kinds of overt activist operations didn’t take place” during the 1930s and 1940s.² Yet people did act in this period, and their protests set the stage for those protests that followed.

In Baltimore individual personalities and strong institutions combined to provide an atmosphere that fostered nonviolent dissent and constructive change. The reasons for Baltimore’s distinctive experience stemmed in part from the geographic and demographic characteristics of the city itself. Located in a border state, Baltimore was not as deeply entrenched in the segregationist tradition as were cities in the lower South. White attitudes were not so harsh, black hopes not so discouraged. Baltimore was a large urban center with a long history of African-American institutional life—including, in slavery days, a vibrant free-black community. In Baltimore great numbers of blacks could gather, exchange ideas, and work closely together to achieve common goals. Too, Baltimore was within an hour’s train travel of the nation’s capital, where large-scale progressive reforms occasionally obtained a hearing and where spokesmen for black equality necessarily convened. Baltimore leaders kept in close touch with A. Phillip Randolph, who in the 1930s envisioned a massive equal-rights march on Washington. During this same

A 1992 graduate of Goucher College, Ms. Shoemaker works at Historic St. Mary’s City.

period in Washington, Carter G. Woodson, known as the father of black history, actively promoted the idea of Negro History Week.

During World War II, when Baltimore underwent a massive population shift, blacks poured into the city from the South as well as from rural areas of Maryland. Thus allowing escape from tenant farming and sharecropping, Baltimore offered African Americans an opportunity to achieve a new sense of independence. It came at a cost, however; overcrowding became a serious problem, one that enabled black leaders to focus on a concrete issue and rally popular strength.³

As a result of housing segregation, African Americans concentrated in the neighborhood known as Old West Baltimore. Bounded by North Avenue on the north, Franklin Street on the south and Madison and Fulton streets on the east and west, this area became a center for African-American culture, especially on "The Avenue"—Pennsylvania Avenue, lined with jazz clubs and ballrooms. Segregation assured the success of businesses along Pennsylvania Avenue simply because white theaters barred African-American spectators and entertainers alike. These entertainment spots drew crowds from all of Old West Baltimore's classes and thereby contributed to social cohesion.⁴

Baltimore's political climate was much more open and accessible than that in many other cities, or so thought the *Baltimore Sun* in 1939, when a headline announced the "City's Record Termed Clean Despite Civil Liberties Rating; Leaders of Minor Political Parties and Extremists Groups Consider Rights Protected." Most of those in power may have sought generally to keep blacks in their place, but, in truth, African Americans in Baltimore did receive support from some members of the white political establishment. As two women who played large roles in the black rights movement later recalled, "there were always a few whites who braved the wrath and scorn and the ostracism to work" for civil rights. One shining example, Theodore R. McKeldin, twice served as mayor of Baltimore and twice as governor. He was personally receptive to black activists; he encouraged civil-rights policy changes in all his administrations. According to the Reverend Marion Bascom of Douglas Memorial Community Church, McKeldin's accessibility allowed the early movement to be both effective and peaceful. "People didn't have to have a 'sit-in' demonstration to see Mr. McKeldin," observed Bascom. "Mr. McKeldin was available and this, I think, made all the difference."⁵



One of the earliest indications of Baltimore's energy in the area of civil rights came in 1933 with organization of the Citywide Young People's Forum. Juanita Jackson first saw a need for the organization when, following her graduation from college, she was unable to find employment. As she spoke with other young people, she discovered that she was not alone. She decided that young people needed a place to meet and discuss common problems, and to develop solutions. Backed by an adult advisory committee, the Forum began meeting at Sharp Street Methodist Church.



Lillie May Carroll Jackson, president of the Baltimore chapter of the NAACP, and her daughter Juanita Jackson, organizer of the Citywide Young People's Forum, in January, 1937. (*Afro-American Newspaper Archives.*)

It soon developed its first campaign. In November, 1933, the forum began picketing merchants in black neighborhoods who refused to hire black workers. In what was termed the "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" campaign, picketers encouraged a boycott of all stores who "wouldn't employ colored young people although their patronage was a hundred percent black." Within weeks the first stores began to hire blacks, and the pickets were halted as other white owners gradually gave in to the boycott's demands. The success of the "Don't Buy" campaign set a precedent in the Baltimore black community, for the forum's work represented the first attempt at boycotts, picketing, and other forms of nonviolent direct action in the local civil rights movement. The campaign combined the forces of many different segments of the black community under the single banner of equality. According to Jackson, the campaign "was the background of the development of a cohesive community single-mindedness on the part of the adults as well as the young people in the northwest community."⁶

Although the forum supplied an early spark to the civil rights movement in Baltimore, three institutions were especially important to its growth and development: the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which enjoyed a revival in 1935; the black church; and Baltimore's

newspaper by and for African-American readers, the *Afro-American*. Founded in 1913, Baltimore's NAACP remained ineffective for much of its existence until the mid-1930s, when Lillie May Carroll Jackson was elected its president. She had become involved in the civil rights movement when her daughter Juanita organized the Citywide Young People's Forum.

Jackson, "a combination of political leader and gospel preacher," was an energetic and demanding woman who ran her organization with great strength for many years. She combined a forceful demand for integration and equality with a non-violent approach stemming from her strong fundamentalist religious background. She was remarkably effective in her dealings with both the white political establishment and the NAACP membership, which came largely from the poor and working classes of Baltimore. Jackson was equally at ease going to "the little people" as she was "walking into anyone's office" downtown, even that of the mayor himself. The Reverend Arthur Payne, pastor of the Enon Baptist Church, called Jackson "quite a talker" and said that "she didn't carry it to the extreme, but she made it so vivid, and so full of action until the people just went wild about it like they did about a minister." Under her leadership, Baltimore's chapter of the NAACP increased from one hundred active members in 1935 to more than 17,600 by 1946.⁷

The NAACP, both locally and nationally, employed the court system to move slowly toward its goal of legal integration. Enolia Pettigen McMillan, who succeeded Jackson as president of the Baltimore chapter of the NAACP, described the organization's approach as "working within the establishment and changing laws, but not overthrowing them." The NAACP approach indicated an interest in becoming part of a transformed society where blacks stood on equal footing with whites, rather than overturning the status quo and completely replacing white leadership. Jackson also expressed a strong "belief in the democratic form of government and adherence to constitutional principles," which pointed the chapter toward an integrationist stance, an approach that was less threatening to the white establishment than more militant black strategies for racial change.⁸

One of the most famous and influential of the NAACP's lawyers was Thurgood Marshall, later the first black justice of the United States Supreme Court. Marshall first distinguished himself in one of the Baltimore NAACP's early cases. In 1934 a bright black student named Donald G. Murray applied for admission to the University of Maryland School of Law and was rejected on the basis of his color. University officials argued that they had fulfilled their obligation to provide "separate but equal" educational opportunities by providing a scholarship for blacks to attend out-of-state professional schools. Marshall's investigation revealed, however, that no money had been put into the scholarship fund and no scholarships had been awarded. Murray won admission to the school, and Marshall won his first major victory as a civil rights attorney. His success set a precedent not only for his career in civil rights, but also for the push toward equality in education. Marshall soon led the campaign for equal pay for black teachers in Maryland, fighting for that cause in the courts of seven different counties until the state legislature in 1941 finally passed a bill mandating equal salary rates. Marshall's work with the NAACP

eventually led in 1954 to his victory in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Supreme Court case that overturned the “separate but equal” doctrine that had governed American race relations since 1896. Perhaps in part because of Marshall’s early work in Baltimore, the city became one of the first school systems to comply with the Supreme Court ruling (in August, 1952, Baltimore’s Polytechnic High School had opened to black children on a limited basis).⁹

In addition to successes in equal pay and education for blacks, Baltimore’s NAACP chapter throughout the 1940s mobilized blacks to utilize their right to register and to vote. In cooperation with such groups as Victorine Adams’s Colored Democratic Women, the NAACP nearly doubled the number of registered voters between 1940 and 1952. The chapter also organized the picketing of Ford’s Theater, which forced blacks to sit in a segregated section of the balcony that could only be reached from a back-alley staircase. Actors’ Equity supported the protest; it stopped sending actors and plays to Ford’s. After seven years of picketing, Ford’s finally caved in. Desegregation of public pools, Sandy Point Park, and Fort Smallwood Municipal Beaches in 1955 helped to establish the organization as a respected institution in the eyes of blacks and whites in Baltimore. In late February, 1964, the NAACP also had a large hand in the passage of the Baltimore City Public Accommodations and Fair Employment Practice Ordinances, which guaranteed an end to lawful discrimination in “employment practices, educational institutions, places of public accommodation, resort or amusement, and health and welfare agencies.”¹⁰



The NAACP could not take on racism single-handedly, of course. The Reverend Bascom was certainly not far from the truth when he stated that “the church was the bulwark of the NAACP.” The two institutions had very strong ties on a variety of levels and supported one another in many efforts. The black church has historically been one of the strongest institutions in the black community, for it was a place where African Americans could come together on a regular basis to exchange ideas and discuss opinions. The roots of the black church also helped to carve out its position in the civil rights movement. As early as 1899 W. E. B. DuBois recognized the role of the black church in his classic work, *The Philadelphia Negro*. According to DuBois, “all movements for social betterment are apt to centre in the churches. . . . The race problem in all its phases is continually discussed and, indeed, from this forum, many a youth goes forth inspired to work.” Even in the very early days of black social movements, Baltimore blacks gathered in the church to discuss abolitionism and African colonization. The church provided opportunities for leadership development and self expression that proved otherwise unavailable to blacks. “The opportunity found in the Negro church to be recognized, and to be ‘somebody,’” Benjamin Elijah Mays wrote in 1933, “has stimulated the pride and preserved the self-respect of many Negroes who would have been entirely beaten by life, and possibly completely submerged.” The church provided a climate for the preservation of black pride and the development of black hope. Bringing the church



Dr. Carl Murphy, editor of the *Afro-American*, at a testimonial dinner at Morgan State College in 1957, the year of his death. (Baltimore *News-American* Photograph Collection, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland; © Hearst Corporation.)

into the NAACP, Juanita Jackson Mitchell has commented, “dignified the activity,” Juanita Jackson Mitchell has observed, “and made it acceptable to the great mass of the people.”¹¹

The church not only helped to legitimize the activism of civil rights supporters but also provided them the theoretical basis for their struggle. The early movement was, almost without exception, non-violent. Lillie Jackson and other black leaders in this period insisted upon this tactic. The commitment to nonviolence was rooted in the religious faith of the community and its leaders. Elizabeth Murphy Ross, daughter of *Afro-American* editor Carl Murphy, described the “good temper” of many leaders of both races during the period. Lillie Jackson’s slogan “Ballots and not Bullets” and Carl Murphy’s ability to “act in ‘good temper’ and to be patient with those who [did] not understand” both stemmed from a strong religious background and the emphasis on spirituality in the black community. Many white political leaders, too, exhibited a strong spiritual commitment. Reverend Bascom described McKeldin as “basically, a deeply religious man” with a “religious fervor about himself.”¹²

The black church in Baltimore had another vital function in the struggle for equality. It provided a network through which information could flow about actions, events, and conditions. According to activist Evelyn Burrell, “ministers were very cooperative in letting us come in and make our presentations to their congregations.” Church buildings themselves furnished an arena for the meetings and other gatherings that became an integral part of the effort. Churches were also better able to support the movement financially than most other institutions in the black community. They were one of the few black organizations that had a fairly steady source of income; in dire circumstances, creditors gained little or nothing by foreclosing on unpaid debt.¹³



The black church and the local chapter of the NAACP joined hands with the *Afro-American*, which John Murphy, Sr., established in 1892. A nationally known newspaper, the *Afro-American* provided the principal outlet for opinion and discussion in the black community. Perhaps its most famous editor was Carl Murphy, who published the paper from 1922 until his death in 1957. One of the stalwarts of the civil rights movement in Baltimore, Murphy—according to the recollections of Enolia McMillan—played a large part in Lillie Jackson’s election as president of the Baltimore NAACP chapter; it was largely his desire to see an effective NAACP chapter in Baltimore that facilitated its revival.¹⁴ Every issue of the *Afro-American* reflected its involvement in this struggle by declaring “What the *Afro* Stands For:”

1. Colored policemen, policewomen and firemen.
2. Colored representatives on City, County and State Boards of Education.
3. Equal salaries for equal work for school teachers without regard to color or sex.
4. Colored members of boards of state institutions where inmates are colored.
5. The organization of labor unions among all groups of colored workers.
6. A university and agricultural college for colored people supported by the state.
7. Closer cooperation between farmers and the state and federal farm agents.¹⁵

Although today these demands do not seem particularly radical, most whites in the 1930s and 1940s did not receive them well. Even within the black community, some readers considered these goals extremist. In the spring of 1942, F. D. Patterson, then president of the Tuskegee Institute, argued against the NAACP’s agenda in a letter to the editor of the *Afro*, contending that when the organization attempted “to carry out its militant and uncompromising procedure into the realm of practical adjustment of Negroes in American life, it fails miserably.”¹⁶

Clearly the *Afro-American* and the movement at large had to engage in a delicate balancing act. Although civil rights leaders wished to stir their followers and inspire them to work for change in their community, they also had to keep them from demanding “too much” and alienating the white liberals who supported their cause. The editors of the *Afro-American* were aware of the need to maintain this balance, and they tried to present both inspirational messages and words of caution. An article describing the efforts of beauticians to “wage war on unfair state board representation” in late 1942 included the angry statement that many congressional representatives “would prefer an axis victory to granting colored people rights.” In the same issue an advertisement appeared praising Booker T. Washington and “his philosophy of race relations,” which “will live forever an intangible monument to a great man, a great leader, a great American.” Washington’s philosophy emphasized the “necessity of conciliation, gradualism and accommodation” and thus provided an excellent counterpoint to the emotional fervor of some other articles. The



An unidentified demonstrator is removed from Hooper's Restaurant in Baltimore by police detectives. The man was one of thirty-three persons arrested on 11 November 1961, as several hundred demonstrators staged sit-ins throughout the city to protest racial segregation by restaurants. All but nine of the arrestees were freed on bail the following day. (*Afro-American* Newspaper Archives.)

Afro-American did a superb job of exciting and inspiring its readers, yet keeping them within the framework of non-violent change.¹⁷

The slant of the articles in the *Afro-American* also helped to emphasize the idea that the black community should become part of the establishment rather than overturn the status quo. The most obvious example of the *Afro's* attitude came in a series in mid-1942 entitled the "Nazi of the Week," in which the writers equated the effort to continue to deny blacks their rights with support of Hitler's fascism. "Hitler's allies" were those "American organizations whose undemocratic policies of refusing employment to colored persons, other than menial jobs, leaves untapped a vital labor market and aids our enemy nations in their efforts." These and other



A crowd at Greenmount and North Avenues reacts to the announcement by CORE leaders of a city directive desegregating Baltimore bars, 23 June 1967. (Baltimore *News-American* Photograph Collection, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland; © Hearst Corporation.)

more specific attacks on discriminatory organizations, such as “Transit Company Jobs for ‘Master Race’ Only” and the attack on the Red Cross as “fascist” for designating race only when blood was donated by blacks, helped to identify the struggle for equality as distinctly American and patriotic.¹⁸ This approach gave black activists and white politicians common ground on which to meet and negotiate.

All of these examples demonstrate the *Afro-American*’s commitment to the cause of racial equality, but they do not necessarily explain its effectiveness. Elizabeth Ross explained that the *Afro* was influential “because we were a black newspaper, because people realized we were interested in the people and that our main concern was reporting the news by and about black people, educating them, informing them, explaining to them what to do, where to go for help.” The paper became a sounding board for the black community and was increasingly respected by blacks and whites as the best source for a black point of view on the movement. Because the *Afro-American* launched a series of investigative pieces on the hiring and serving practices of businesses, many companies that had discriminatory policies “changed long before the demonstrations and marches came about.”¹⁹

Most important, perhaps, was the fact that the *Afro-American* was “the only outlet for black opinion” and that mainstream newspapers simply did not cover the stories of the greatest interest to the black community. According to reporter Clarence Mitchell, the *Sun* was “among the worst offenders among the dailies” in terms of “playing down the positive and highlighting crime” in the black community. Mitchell’s assertion can be upheld: even a cursory look at the *Sun* and *Evening Sun* reveals that such major accomplishments as the integration of the University of Maryland law school and the 1942 march on Annapolis either were briefly mentioned in articles buried in the back pages or not covered at all.²⁰ In addition to devoting space to significant developments in the civil rights movement, the *Afro-American* gave evidence of interest in the community with such regular features as “In Our Churches” and “Along the Avenue.” Stories in the *Afro-American* highlighted the achievements of black Baltimoreans.



The *Afro-American*, black churches, and the local chapter of the NAACP all exercised significant power in their own right, but it was the combining of their influence and their supporters that stimulated the growth of the Baltimore civil rights movement. Each of the organizations and its leaders supported one another, helped to provide volunteers and resources, and provided an outlet for the dissemination of information. Enolia McMillan has discussed how the *Afro-American* made certain that the “black community always knew what the NAACP was doing.” Moreover, according to her, the church’s involvement was “due primarily to the fact that equality of opportunity and justice is part of the Christian Creed” and to the need to put the theories of religion into practice.²¹

The march on Annapolis that took place on 23 April 1942 offered an example of cooperation among the three organizations. One of the main goals of the early movement was to eliminate job discrimination against people of color. Therefore, “the *Afro* cooperated with the NAACP and other groups in the city, churches, ministers, etc., in the formation of the Citizen’s Committee for Justice,” whose primary concern was the exposure of job discrimination wherever it occurred in Baltimore. In 1942 the committee was called to deal with an incident of police brutality, which inevitably led to a discussion of the small number of blacks on the police force. In February of that year, a black had been shot in the back by a white police officer for resisting arrest after attempting to ride in an unlicensed taxi. Although the officer was indicted by a grand jury, the jury reversed its decision after meeting with the police chief, and the officer was exonerated. The *Afro-American* publicized the fact that, although ten blacks had been killed by white police officers in the past four years, none of the officers had ever been held accountable. Mayor Howard Jackson had no comment, and the committee began to organize a march to Annapolis to bring the issue to the attention of Governor and former prosecutor Herbert R. O’Connor, a Democrat.²²



The Police Department Community Center in the 1900 block of Greenmount Avenue, Baltimore, with a sign on the door reading, "LET'S TALK IT OVER." Such centers had been credited for a time with contributing to peace between the police and ghetto dwellers. This photograph symbolizes the violent disintegration of that relationship in April, 1968. (*Afro-American Newspaper Archives.*)

The committee held its weekly planning sessions at the *Afro* office. First, there was to be a rally at the Sharp Street Methodist Church, where Lillie Jackson was a long-time trustee, and then a delegation of representatives was to be sent to Annapolis by bus, train, and private car to meet with the governor. Donations for the cost of the trip came largely from individuals and church congregations and were collected through the committee. Publicity came in the pages of the *Afro-American* as well as through the supporting churches and organizations.²³

When 23 April finally arrived, thousands of people gathered outside Sharp Street Methodist to demonstrate support for the delegation. By eleven o'clock, most of the two thousand delegates were on their way to Annapolis. Promptly at two o'clock, the governor arrived at the State House to meet with the demonstrators and hear their demands. The delegates presented their requests, calling for the investigation of blacks killed by police since 1939, the hiring of uniformed black policemen (and more policewomen), and the appointment of more African Americans to the city bench and to state and city boards. Many civic and religious organizations in Baltimore had endorsed these demands. The rally, march, and meeting helped to demonstrate the power and solidarity of the black community and encouraged many

reforms within Governor O'Connor's administration, including the creation of the new Commission to Study the Problems Affecting the Colored Population, which replaced the ineffective Interracial Commission of 1927. In 1942 there were riots in Harlem and Detroit, but not in Baltimore because, as Juanita Jackson Mitchell points out, "we channelled the frustration and resentment and bitterness into constructive protests, went to Annapolis to protest and got some results."²⁴

The 1942 march on Annapolis offered but one example of how the NAACP, the *Afro-American*, and black churches worked together in the 1930s and 1940s to create an atmosphere conducive to change—in Baltimore and elsewhere. The Baltimore movement relied heavily on kinship networks—the Jackson family being a prominent example. Lillie Jackson became involved in the movement when her daughters Juanita and Virginia became active. In turn, the daughters were greatly influenced by the fervor and commitment with which their mother approached her work. While Juanita remained involved in the Baltimore movement and eventually became a national NAACP staff member, Virginia moved with her husband to Georgia. There she continued the tradition of activism in her family and organized a voting campaign. "Mama reached down in Georgia, through her influence," Virginia has testified. "I was following the pattern. I was doing that type of thing in Georgia."²⁵

Less directly, Baltimore's black organizations, combined with other favorable factors in the city, allowed the city to be in the vanguard of racial integration. Baltimore acted, in many respects, as a model of peaceful change for cities around the country. "A lot of things that we have accomplished in Baltimore," one veteran of the movement recalls, "helped to mold what happened all over the United States."²⁶

NOTES

1. Evelyn Burrell (OH 8138), McKeldin-Jackson Oral History Project, Maryland Historical Society (hereafter the McKeldin-Jackson Project).

2. Clarence Mitchell (OH 8154), McKeldin-Jackson Project. For background on the civil rights movement in Maryland, see Harvard Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), and George H. Callcott, *Maryland and America: 1940 to 1980* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985).

3. Sitkoff, *New Deal for Blacks*, pp. 147–48.

4. See Karen Olson, "Old West Baltimore: Segregation, African-American Culture, and the Struggle for Equality," in Elizabeth Fee, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman, eds., *The Baltimore Book* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), p. 57. Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Free Press, 1984), p. 3, observes that, "ironically, urban segregation . . . facilitated the development of black institutions and the building of close-knit communities when blacks, irrespective of education and income, were forced to live in close proximity and frequent the same social institutions."

5. Baltimore *Sun*, 9 March 1939; Juanita Jackson Mitchell and Virginia Jackson Kiah (OH 8094), McKeldin-Jackson Project; the Reverend Marian Bascom (OH 8128), *ibid.*

6. Juanita Jackson Mitchell and Virginia Jackson Kiah (OH 8094) and Evelyn Burrell (OH 8138), McKeldin-Jackson Project; Olson, "Old West Baltimore," p. 69.

7. Louis Shub (OH 8100), McKeldin-Jackson Project; Juanita Jackson Mitchell and Virginia Jackson Kiah (OH 8097), *ibid.*; Evelyn Burrell (OH 8138), *ibid.*; the Reverend Arthur Payne (OH 8076), *ibid.*

8. Enolia Pettigen McMillan (OH 8110), *ibid.*

9. Juanita Jackson Mitchell and Virginia Jackson Kiah (OH 8097), McKeldin-Jackson Project; Callcott, *Maryland and America*, p. 147.

10. Dr. J. E. T. Camper (OH 8134), McKeldin-Jackson Project; Louis Shub (OH 8100) and Juanita Jackson Mitchell and Virginia Jackson Kiah (OH 8097), *ibid.*; Baltimore City Public Accommodations and Fair Employment Practices Ordinances 26 February 1964, copy in Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore; Olson, "Old West Baltimore," p. 73.

11. The Reverend Marian Bascom (OH 8128), McKeldin-Jackson Project; Mary Frances Berry and John W. Blassingame, *Long Memory: The Black Experience in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 92; W. E. B DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, quoted *ibid.*, p. 105; Olson, "Old West Baltimore," p. 63; Benjamin Elijah Mays, *The Negro's Church* (New York: Arno Press, 1969 [orig. publ. 1933]), p. 281; Juanita Jackson Mitchell and Virginia Jackson Kiah (OH 8097), McKeldin-Jackson Project.

12. Elizabeth Murphy Ross (OH 8140), McKeldin-Jackson Project; the Reverend Marian Bascom (OH 8128), *ibid.*

13. Evelyn Burrell (OH 8138), *ibid.*; Mays, *The Negro's Church*, p. 279.

14. Enolia Pettigen McMillan (OH 8110), McKeldin-Jackson Project.

15. *Afro-American*, 31 October 1942.

16. *Ibid.*, 28 March 1942.

17. *Ibid.*, 26 December 1942; Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks*, p. 11.

18. *Afro-American*, 21 November 1942, 24 October 1942, and 2 May 1942.

19. Elizabeth Murphy Ross (OH 8140), McKeldin-Jackson Project.

20. Harry Cole (OH 8103), McKeldin-Jackson Project; Clarence Mitchell (OH 8154), *ibid.*

21. Baltimore *Sun* and *Evening Sun*, 19 June 1935 and 24 April 1942.

22. Callcott, *Maryland and America*, p. 149.

23. *Afro-American*, 18 April 1942.

24. *Ibid.*, 26 April 1942; Callcott, *Maryland and America*, p. 149; Juanita Jackson Mitchell (OH 8095), McKeldin-Jackson Project.

25. Juanita Jackson Mitchell and Virginia Jackson Kiah (OH 8097), McKeldin-Jackson Project.

26. Dr. J. E. T. Camper (OH 8134), McKeldin-Jackson Project.



The long arm of the proprietor on the turnstile stops racial integrators at Five Oaks Swimming Club in Baltimore, August, 1963. (Baltimore *News-American* Photograph Collection, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland; © Hearst Corporation.)

Power from the Pulpit: Baltimore's African-American Clergy, 1950-1970

DAVID MILOBSKY

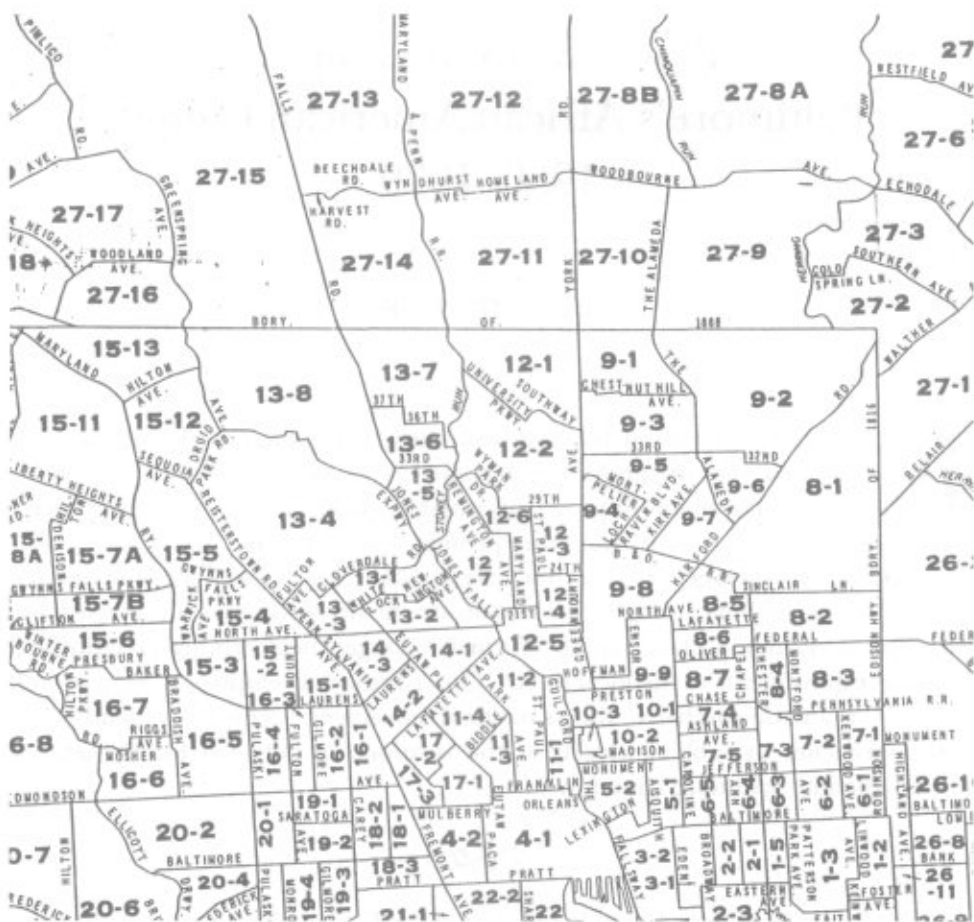
From the slavery period forward, churches have served as the institutional backbone of the African-American community.¹ Scholars often focus on the civil rights movement to prove this point, highlighting the accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other prominent churchmen during this period. In recent years, however, the churches' role in America's civil rights movement has inspired an intriguing controversy. Some historians stress King's achievements, but their epic narratives, although quite informative, largely neglect King's relationship to protest movements at the local level.² Other historians emphasize local protest movements and de-emphasize King's national movement.³ This essay blends these two approaches by looking closely at the relationship between King's national movement and Baltimore churchmen.



In 1960, the Baltimore black community sharply divided between middle-class, west-side blacks and lower class, east-side blacks. This fissure had been widening since the end of World War II, when well-to-do black professionals, managers, and other higher-income groups had begun to migrate to the larger houses and greener spaces of the city's northwest quarter.⁴ The 1960 census for Baltimore City highlighted this trend. In west-side census tracts where blacks comprised at least 60 percent of the population, the median family income was \$4,686 per year. On the east side median family income was 25 percent less (\$3,509 per year). In west-side tracts the median number of years of school completed by adults was 9.2 years. On the east side the average was only 7.6 years.⁵ This 1.6-year gap could well have meant the difference between a high school diploma with some college work and no degree at all—differences which could have a significant impact on an individual's career options.

Two sample census tracts, one east and one west, made these socio-economic divisions even more apparent. On the west side, census tract 15-7A was bordered by Liberty Heights Avenue on the north, Gwynns Falls Parkway on the south,

Mr. Milobsky is a graduate student in history at the Johns Hopkins University.



Census tracts in Baltimore. (U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1960.)

Denison Avenue on the west, and Maryland Avenue on the east. It was home to 4,100 blacks in 1960. Most of the housing units were fashionable, single-family homes vacated by white families who had fled to the suburbs.⁶ Compared to the Baltimore black community as a whole in 1960, those African Americans who lived in tract 15-7A had high incomes and were highly educated. The median family income in this tract was \$6,554 per year, and the median number of years of school completed by adult individuals was 12.2. Moreover, a high proportion of the black work force in this tract (31 percent) were professionals, technicians, entrepreneurs, or managers.⁷

Census tract 5-1 presented a sharply contrasting picture of the black community. Tract 5-1 was located on the east side of the city; its borders were Madison Avenue on the north, Aisquith Street on the east, Baltimore Street on the south, and Fallsway on the west. Here the median income was only \$2,003 per year, and the median number of years of school completed was only 7.3. Even more significant was the

occupational profile of the area's work force. Only 2.8 percent of the population consisted of technicians, professionals, craftsmen, or managers. Little wonder that more than 50 percent of the housing units in this tract were, according to the census taker, "deteriorating, dilapidated, or lacking plumbing facilities." Less than 5 percent of the housing units in the west-side tract were in this condition.⁸

This socio-economic division led to deep political differences. In the early 1960s, middle-class segments of the black community were conservative, especially with regard to civil rights protests. The Reverend Wendell Phillips, pastor of the Heritage United Church of Christ, commented that "middle-class black folks were just as conservative as middle-class white folks when it came to civil rights."⁹ Middle-class blacks—west-side blacks—were not so quick to challenge a status quo that had been, from an economic standpoint, relatively good to them.¹⁰ These instinctive conservatives were crucial to a viable civil rights protest movement. They had money, education, influence, and legitimacy, but, in the early sixties, many of them favored not protest but litigation, education, and incremental social and economic mobility.

Although these political, economic, and geographic divisions were significant, black churches were nonetheless a strong unifying force in Baltimore. A Maryland Council of Churches survey of 1960 counted more than one hundred black churches within the city limits. They had a combined membership of 44,260, roughly 15 percent of Baltimore's black population.¹¹ This figure significantly understated the influence of the black church, however, for it included only formal members who regularly attended services. Furthermore, the survey also failed to measure the unusual way churches bridged divisions in the black community.

Documentary research and interviews indicate that the churches were instrumental in keeping lines of communication open between east- and west-side blacks. The Reverend Leroy Fitts, pastor of the First Baptist Church, and Reginald Harris, a trustee at Macedonia Baptist Church, have explained how the bonds of church loyalty worked (and still work) to achieve that end. These bonds were strong, so strong that many people who "made it" to the west side still commuted downtown or over to the east side on Sundays to attend their old church. Likewise, if an east-side church relocated to the west side in order to be closer to certain segments of the congregation, east-side congregants often traveled across town to the new location. Indeed, Mr. Harris himself has lived in northwest Baltimore for the past twenty years, yet he still chooses to drive downtown on Sunday to attend services at Macedonia.¹² In black churches, middle- and lower-class blacks worked and worshipped together as equals, maintaining bonds of understanding and fellowship. These bonds proved essential to the civil rights mobilization effort in Baltimore.



Although churches could unify the community, their pastors had to assume a new leadership role in order to effect significant social change. Ministers needed to look beyond the walls of their respective churches and assert themselves as community

leaders. The Baltimore chapter of the NAACP moved many ministers in this direction.

Headed for many years by Lillie May Carroll Jackson, the Baltimore chapter was at the forefront of civil rights protest from 1935 to 1958. Baltimore's ministers were heavily involved in the organization, providing eight out of fourteen vice presidents of the Baltimore chapter, six of fourteen committee chairpersons, and eighteen of sixty executive committee members.¹³

These ministers were not distant administrators or figureheads; they played a key role in the NAACP's effort to mobilize Baltimore citizens against racial injustice. In 1943 several ministers joined with Mrs. Jackson and her daughter, Juanita Jackson Mitchell, in leading a voter registration drive. The Reverend John L. Tilley was chairman of the registration committee. The Reverend Vernon S. Dobson of St. Marks Baptist Church and the Reverend Hiram E. Smith of Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church also played key roles. With ministers heading the campaign, the committee encouraged other Baltimore ministers to join the voter mobilization drive. After recruiting ministers from different neighborhoods, the committee held each minister responsible for the mobilization of his congregation and the geographical areas surrounding their churches. Using this locally based system of organization, the NAACP was able to register more than nine thousand new voters in 1943. As the Register-and-Vote campaign clearly illustrated, black ministers were able to develop an effective mobilization network that could activate a significant portion of the black community.¹⁴

In 1955, the Baltimore NAACP again made effective use of the ministers' network. Together with Clarence M. Mitchell Jr., Lillie May Jackson formed the Citizens Committee for Civil Rights Legislation (CCCL). Again a minister, the Reverend Marcus Wood of Providence Baptist Church, served as committee chair. Again, black ministers mobilized different segments of the black community in support of city and state civil rights legislation. On 25 February 1955 the Reverend Wood and Mrs. Jackson wrote a letter to black Baltimore pastors, urging them to encourage their congregations to write to their representatives in support of a bill before the General Assembly designed to end religious and racial segregation in public accommodations and employment. They also asked the clergy to get people to attend an upcoming public hearing on the bill. In 1955, as in 1943, the ministers were instrumental in moving the black community towards political action.¹⁵

The black ministers' network continued to be a potent force through the 1950s and into the 1960s. The Register-and-Vote campaign was still going strong in this period. Tilley continued to recruit new ministers, thus increasing the network's impact. In fact, the network had grown so efficient that, by 1957, Tilley and his corps of ministers were registering black voters at the rate of one thousand per month. The network's remarkable productivity soon drew attention from places as far away as Charleston, South Carolina, and Charlotte, North Carolina. NAACP chapters from these two cities wrote to Tilley asking how to set up a similar network in their home towns.¹⁶ Martin Luther King Jr. also impressed by the Reverend



Demonstrators arrive with a portion of four hundred prepared signs at Cornerstone Baptist Church on Bolton Street in Baltimore, 11 November 1961. (Baltimore *News-American* Photograph Collection, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland; © Hearst Corporation.)

Tilley's accomplishments, appointed him the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's executive director later that same year.¹⁷

This black ministerial network, decentralized and dependent upon personal appeals, was a face-to-face, grassroots organization that allowed the NAACP to reach a significant percentage of the entire community (east and west side), and, more importantly, motivated many members of that community to take action. Preachers carried the NAACP's call to the black public, moving them to take a stand for racial integration and voting rights. In the 1960s Martin Luther King's influence directed this network toward more militant activities. Central to this process was King's effect on black-church theology and on the black minister's perceived role in the community.



Even though the Baltimore pastors had a proud history of civil rights activity, a great majority of them remained uninvolved. Most continued to preach the style of "otherworldly" theology that had been popular for several generations. These

ministers did not lead marches protesting racial and economic inequalities. Instead, they preached the value of patience and divine justice to their congregations. As the Reverend W. J. Winston, pastor of New Metropolitan Baptist Church in Baltimore, explained in one of his sermons: "Adversity and affliction are God's ministers sent out in search of heroism in men." Winston turned to scripture and found the lesson:

Job withering under the fires of affliction and adversity speaks in tones of Virtue, when he says, "In all the days of my appointed time, will I wait until my change comes." Paul of Tarsus, stoned and beaten with rods, speaks with Virtue's courage, "None of these things move me." My brethren, Prosperity does not always lead to God: Affliction and persecution at times bring out the best that is in man.¹⁸

Winston and other black ministers helped their congregations cope with an unjust present by looking for heavenly redemption. They did not call on their congregations to take arms against injustice. Like Job, one had to have faith in God and wait for the day when He would deliver them from this suffering. The pain that the black community experienced at the hands of white society was, therefore, a test of character, a test of will—a test that would ultimately prepare them for ascendance to the Kingdom of God. The road to salvation—the road to freedom from injustice and persecution—did not involve radical protest or community action, it involved patience and faith in divine justice. This otherworldly viewpoint was not entirely passive. Winston's sermon also contained strong currents of race pride and a belief that blacks would one day overcome their afflictions and realize the freedom and prosperity that they deserved. Winston viewed the black community's suffering, not as a cause for sorrow, but as a mark of distinction.

When God would make a people great, He calls for the Angel of Suffering. . . . Suffering takes his orders from God; something like this. "Take that people and make them great, for Me. Take them by the corn fields, and bind their backs with heavy burdens; blister their feet; separate them from their families, take their babes from their bosoms; take all their friends away, make them weep, make them moan; let no voice be lifted for them, in their agony and sorrow, then bring them back to Me, and I will make them great."¹⁹

Adversity, in Winston's view, was a blessing, a portent of future greatness.

That greatness might be far in the future, but Winston advised his congregation to lose neither faith, nor pride in themselves. Life was a battle among "Sublime Princes." Ultimate victory lay "not in the sword, but in the man who wields the sword." Although their persecutors appeared to hold an invincible array of weapons, he believed that the black community's unique brand of inner strength would ultimately prevail. Preparing his followers for "battle," Winston told them to take pride and comfort in who they were: "Let no Sublime Prince be ashamed of the Race from which you have come, but rather thank kindly Providence that you have come forth at such a time as this."²⁰



Baltimore ministers joined the picket line outside the Board of Education in August, 1963. From left, the Reverends Marcus Wood, Providence Baptist Church; A. J. Payne, Enon Baptist Church; James L. Moore, Sharon Baptist Church; Jentry McDonald, NAACP; and Octavius Graham, Knox Presbyterian Church. (*Afro-American Newspaper Archives.*)

Martin Luther King Jr.'s theology also stressed themes of freedom and liberation, but he moved away from Winston's otherworldly emphasis. King's followers aimed to build a Kingdom of God on earth. Blacks did not have to endure suffering and racial injustice as they waited for God's promised kingdom to arrive. In King's activist theology, individuals had to seek freedom from oppression in their lifetime. King decried the "many Negro churches . . . absorbed in a future good 'over yonder'" In his view, they conditioned their members to "adjust to the present evils 'over here.'"²¹ King called on the black church to focus on the here and now—actively to work for the realization of "God given" human rights for all. Following the example of Moses, each individual should listen to his or her conscience, and act, for God helped those who helped themselves. Then, and only then, would blacks reach the Promised Land.²²

King blended non-violent protest tactics with black folk religion. While this was a powerful combination to be sure, even in the 1960s most preachers felt that King was too "radical." Support for him and his program was neither unanimous nor unqualified. Many ministers, clinging to their otherworldly theology, maintained a quiet distance between King and themselves. Ministers, they felt, had no business demonstrating in the streets, breaking the law, and getting arrested. A minister did not belong in the jail but in the church, attending to spiritual matters. In a recent

interview, Dr. Herbert Edwards, former pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, highlighted this trend. According to Edwards, of the three hundred preachers in the Baltimore area, King never drew more than thirty to any of his speaking engagements in Baltimore.²³

As the 1960s wore on, however, more and more ministers were drawn to King, to his tactics, and to his theology. The 1963 march on Washington played a pivotal role. It showed black ministers that King's non-violent protest tactics could work on a large scale. Moreover, the march generated publicity that pushed all black ministers closer to King in the eyes of the public. Those television viewers who saw a black preacher from Alabama march on the Lincoln Memorial developed new expectations about black religious leaders. A preacher did not have to confine himself to exclusively "spiritual" matters. King's role in the march showed that ministers could also be effective political leaders. From that point forward, black ministers found it difficult to separate themselves from King's powerful image.

After the march on Washington, King won followers in the Baltimore area. In the 1960s, a cadre of young ministers committed to Dr. King's style of civil disobedience emerged. Vernon Dobson, Logan Kearse, Sidney Daniels, and Marion C. Bascom spearheaded sit-ins at lunch counters, parks, and public facilities, but they were the exception to the rule. Conservatism was still the dominant theme of the Baltimore black ministry—until 1968.



The assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and the ensuing riots had a profound effect on Baltimore's ministers. The events of 1968 led many to realize that the status quo could not continue, and that they had to help change it. In Baltimore, many of the black ministers greeted the assassination with shock, dismay, and grief, but others responded with calls for mobilization and non-violent protest. The Reverend Dobson, at a meeting of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, encouraged his fellow ministers to take a greater part in this process. Implying that it was ministerial apathy, not white racism, that killed King, he expressed his hope that black ministers would "put their money where their mouths are and start to support just causes."²⁵ Dobson reminded his fellow ministers of their responsibility to fight a system that allowed racists to ignore the rights of blacks and kill their leaders.

Dobson's call for mobilization found a sympathetic audience in other sectors of the Baltimore black community. Madeline Murphy, a community-action commissioner and civil rights activist, echoed his cry for vigilance and non-violent action. In Murphy's view, King's death was a vivid reminder that the black community could no longer ignore racism and injustice. "The sleeping black giant" had to be awakened. Murphy encouraged black leaders to "knock on every door" in their efforts to "mobilize for freedom and unity."²⁶ From inside the clergy and without, demands for mobilization rained down upon Baltimore's ministers, urging them to fill the expanded leadership role that Dr. King had established for them.



A waitress at a Baltimore restaurant (Eastern Avenue) reads a "trespass law" to sit-in demonstrators on 18 november 1961, a time when civil rights protests in the city were mostly peaceful. The demonstrators left after hearing the law but picketed the restaurant. (Baltimore *News-American* Photograph Collection, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland; © Hearst Corporation.)

Black ministers could neither ignore these calls nor overlook the violence in the Gay Street corridor. Riots broke out two days after the King assassination and lasted for nearly a week before Gov. Spiro T. Agnew called in the National Guard and federal troops to quell the uprising. After the flames and violence had subsided, Agnew called a meeting of Baltimore black leaders and publicly lambasted them for capitulating to the demands of what he termed "a circuit-riding, Hanoi-visiting . . . caterwauling, riot-inciting, burn-America-down, type of leader"²⁷—meaning Stokely Carmichael. Agnew believed that the Baltimore riots were Carmichael's doing, and he accused Baltimore's black leaders of lacking the courage to condemn him and his destructive agenda.

Blaming the riots on "outside agitators," Agnew neglected deeper social, economic, and political factors behind the violence. Baltimore's black leaders quickly realized they could not depend on the supposedly moderate Republican governor to look out for their community's interests. In fact, a great majority of the leaders

who attended Agnew's assembly walked out on the governor's speech and convened a black caucus of their own at the Douglass Memorial Community Church.

Agnew's speech and the walkout galvanized Baltimore's clergy. Following on the heels of King's assassination and the riots, it drove home the realization that an acceptance of the status quo and an otherworldly approach to racism were no longer tenable positions. Many ministers realized that they must mobilize their community quickly against the racist elements of society that had killed King and enraged their youth. Agnew "is forcing all of us to become militants," said one Baltimore preacher who attended Agnew's conference. "We are the moderates who strove for a continuing dialogue for unity."²⁸ The level of community involvement of many Baltimore ministers dramatically increased. Those who were relatively inactive started to play a larger role in community affairs, and others who were already active intensified their efforts to dampen violence, encourage political action, and address economic grievances.

King's death, the riots, and Agnew's "conference" had sent a strong message. Many ministers responded by developing new approaches that reflected a new and expanded image of the black preacher—the image Dr. King embodied. They began to recognize that King's life provided guidelines they should follow. Like King, they could move their congregations, the Baltimore community, and even the entire country toward racial equality and economic justice. King's life provided Baltimore's preachers with an example, but it was his death that decisively converted them to this new faith. The fear that engulfed the Baltimore black community after King's assassination, the riots, and Agnew's grandstand play awakened a large segment of Baltimore's black clergy and drove them to social action. Interviews make clear that a significantly larger proportion of Baltimore's ministers assumed a greater role in the community after King's death and the riots.²⁹

Ministers promoted plans that addressed black economic inequalities. New names appeared on the scene. The Reverend James L. Moore, pastor of Sharon Baptist Church since 1945, followed the lead of the Reverend Leon Sullivan of Philadelphia and started a chapter of the Opportunities Industrial Center (OIC) in Baltimore. Drawing from the leadership ranks of local black churches, industry, and government, the OIC instituted job training programs to prepare the unemployed and the underemployed for job openings in the community. Although representatives from government and industry played vital roles in the OIC's program, the church was the driving force behind the organization. Board meetings were held at Sharon Baptist Church, whose members also purchased a building to house OIC classes in carpentry, auto repair, and secretarial skills. In addition, the Reverend Vernon Dobson served as the Baltimore OIC's first executive director.³⁰ In attacking economic inequality Dobson, Moore, and the OIC embraced the program King had advocated shortly before his death. In King's words, they began to see the black community as "trapped within an economically oriented power structure," and sought to win for Baltimore blacks "a job enabling them to control their own lives."³¹



The Reverend Vernon Dobson, pastor of Union Baptist Church, at a nondenominational breakfast for social workers at Lovely Lane Methodist Church, 2300 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, on 30 October 1968. (Baltimore *News-American* Photograph Collection, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland; © Hearst Corporation.)

Other Baltimore ministers pressed forward. The Reverend Bascom, pastor of Douglass Memorial Community Church, purchased the entire 1300 block of Madison Avenue with church funds, renovated the buildings, and converted them to low-income housing.³² The Reverend Dobson's Union Baptist Church constructed a community center adjacent to their building on Druid Hill Avenue. The center provided job training, literacy classes, and child care services.³³

Moore's OIC chapter, Bascom's housing project, and Dobson's community and day care centers all demonstrated how Baltimore ministers applied their churches' mobilization potential to new and innovative uses, thus promoting (in the words of one reporter for the *Afro-American*) the black church's "evolution into a self-run government dedicated to the liberation of its people."³⁴ In the wake of King's assassination, many black ministers began to resemble modern governmental leaders. Black churches became another level of government—serving the particular needs of the black community and assuming a large measure of responsibility for its social and economic well-being. Projects like Moore's, Bascom's, and Dobson's

demonstrate how many pastors sought (and continue to seek) to demolish barriers to their community's economic/social development and construct programs aimed at eliminating them.



King's importance invites a return to a style of analysis—a variant on the “great man” theory of history—that lately has been out of vogue among professional historians. A large share of Baltimore's preachers, following King's example, realized that they were in a position to mobilize their community and effect social change. Many took advantage of that opportunity.³⁵ Thus one mark of King's “greatness” was his ability to get local black preachers to accept an expanded role for themselves so they could provide leadership, encouragement, and a unifying focus for blacks at the grass-roots level. In this way, King's ideals transcended the powerful forces of fragmentation operating in the Baltimore black community during the years following World War II.

King's effect on Baltimore ministers as both a leader and a symbol confirms the “great man” principle. The long-term effects of discrimination, racism, and economic inequality undoubtedly fueled the mobilization of Baltimore's black community once the process got underway, but individuals began the process. King served as a model and inspiration to the ministers, who, in turn, mobilized the community at large. The ministers were the ones best equipped to spread the flames of social change. As longstanding leaders of the community, they could provide the face-to-face personal appeals necessary to overcome internal obstacles such as fear, inertia, and socio-economic division. Once King's death put them in motion, they mobilized the community rapidly and efficiently.

Baltimore's experience proves that individuals can still influence the course of history.

NOTES

1. See Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974); Carter G. Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church* (Washington: Associated Publishers, 1925); Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll* (New York: Random House, 1974). See also Benjamin Mays and Joseph Nicholson, *The Negro's Church* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1933). For discussions of the black church's role in modern black America, see C. Eric Lincoln, *The Black Church in the African-American Experience* (New York: Duke University Press, 1990); E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Church in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964); and Hart M. Nelsen and Anne Kusener Nelsen, *The Black Church in the Sixties* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1975).

2. Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982); David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross* (New York: W. Morrow, 1972); David L. Lewis, *King: a Biography* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978); Stephen B. Oates, *Let the*

Trumpet Sound (New York: Harper & Row, 1982); Flip Schulke and Penelope McPhee, *King Remembered* (New York: Norton, 1986). Adam Fairclough, *To Redeem the Soul of America* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987).

3. Several scholars have pointed out that local organizations made great strides in the area of civil rights independently of King and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference. See Robert J. Norrell, *Reaping the Whirlwind: The Civil Rights Movement in Tuskegee* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985); William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Struggle for Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); John Dittmer, "The Politics of Mississippi Movement, 1954-1964," in *The Civil Rights Movement in America*, ed. Charles W. Eagles (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1986). Even those researchers investigating events in which King and the SCLC were actively involved have begun to emphasize the local actors who played critical roles. See J. Mills Thornton, "Challenge and Response in the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-56," *Alabama Review*, 33 (July 1980): 163-235; Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: The Free Press, 1984); David R. Colburn, *Racial Change and Community Crisis: St. Augustine, Florida, 1877-1980* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

4. For a more detailed description of this demographic shift, see A. R. Colby, "Integration in Baltimore, 1954-1968" (M.A. thesis, University of Maryland, College Park, 1980). Researchers have chronicled similar shifts in other cities, most notably Chicago and New York. See William Julius Wilson, "The Changing Structure of Urban Poverty," in *Quiet Riots*, Fred R. Harris and Roger W. Williams, eds. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988) and Kenneth Clark, *Dark Ghetto* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1989), pp. 55-62.

5. *U.S. Census of Population and Housing: 1960, Final Report PHC(1)-13: Baltimore, Md.*, Table P-4. The border between east and west census tracts was jagged but distinct. Although a group of upper-income blacks settled in the northeast portion of the city, an overwhelming majority of blacks with above average incomes lived in the northwest sections. The upper-income northeast tracts were included in the calculations for the median household income for the east-side tracts.

6. For more on "white flight" to the Baltimore suburbs, see Colby, "Integration in Baltimore, 1954-1968." See also Sherry Olson, *Baltimore* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), pp. 371-72.

7. *U.S. Census of Population and Housing: 1960, Final Report PHC(1)-13: Baltimore, Maryland*, Table P-4.

8. *Ibid.*, Tables P-4 and H-1.

9. Author's interview with Wendell Phillips, 12 December 1990.

10. Although the status quo was good to west-side blacks, one must bear in mind that "good" is a relative term. The median income for west-side blacks in 1960 was still well below that of whites in Baltimore City at \$10,673 per year (1960 *U.S. Census*, Table P-4).

11. Maryland Council of Churches, *Churches in Baltimore* (Baltimore, 1960).

12. Author's interviews with Leroy Fitts and Reginald Harris, December, 1990.

13. Letterhead of NAACP (Baltimore Chapter, 1955), the Papers of Clarence M. Mitchell Jr. (hereafter cited as Mitchell MSS.). I was given access to these important

papers through the good offices of Mrs. Nanette Mitchell and with the kind assistance of Michael Mitchell. I greatly appreciate their assistance.

14. "Mt. Lebanon Baptist Register and Vote Campaign Committee," NAACP Press Release (March, 1943); Register and Vote Campaign Report (1944); NAACP Membership Pamphlet (1945), all in Mitchell MSS.

15. Rev. Marcus Wood and Lillie May Jackson to Baltimore ministers, 25 February 1955; Lillie May Jackson to Rev. R. H. Sanderson, 3 March 1955; Lillie May Jackson to Rev. Marcus Wood, 6 March 1955; Lillie May Jackson to Rev. Harrison Bryant, 6 March 1955; Lillie May Jackson to Harry Cole, 6 March 1955, all in Mitchell MSS. For more on this aspect of black churches and ministers, see Lincoln, *Black Church in the African-American Experience*, pp. 210–12, 217–21, 234, and Morris, *Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, pp. 5–7, 40–76. See also Charles Tilley, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1978), pp. 62–69.

16. Ellis Duncombe to Rev. John Tilley, 23 July 1957; Bernice Robinson to Rev. John Tilley, 31 July 1957; Rev. John Tilley to Baltimore ministers, 4 April 1957, 17 May 1957, 23 July 1957, 6 and 14 September 1957; Rev. John Tilley to Rev. J. H. Cashen, 9 August 1957; Lillie M. Jackson to Paul Butler, 30 November 1957, all in Mitchell MSS.

17. Although hired with great expectations, Tilley did not flourish as the SCLC's executive director. Personality conflicts forced him out after one year of service. King replaced him with the Rev. Wyatt T. Walker. On Tilley's brief tenure, see Garrow, *Bearing the Cross*, pp. 109, 115–16.

18. Rev. W. J. Winston, *The Day of Joy and Light* (Baltimore, 1946), p. 8. The otherworldly style dated to the early decades of the twentieth century; see Mays and Nicholson, *The Negro's Church*, pp. 7, 58, 70–85.

19. Winston, *Day of Joy and Light*, p. 8.

20. *Ibid.* p. 9.

21. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here?: Chaos or Community* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 124.

22. On King's role in the evolution of black theology, see Morris, *Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, pp. 96–98; Gayraud Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism* (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday & Co., 1972), pp. 234–50; James H. Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power* (New York: Seabury Press, 1969), pp. 108–9.

23. Author's interview with Herbert Edwards, 25 February 1991.

24. Author's interviews with Wendell Phillips and Leroy Fitts. See also Morris, *Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, p. 60.

25. *Baltimore Sun*, 6 April 1968.

26. *Baltimore Afro-American*, 12 April 1968.

27. *Sun*, 12 April 1968. During the year preceding King's assassination and the riots, Carmichael, who believed that violence might be necessary in order to protect the black community's interests, had emerged as a leading advocate of "black power" in the United States. Carmichael visited Baltimore on 3 April 1968, delivering speeches and pressing his viewpoint on leaders of the black community. Agnew believed Carmichael had incited Baltimore's blacks to riot just as he believed that

H. Rap Brown, vice-president of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (Carmichael was the president), had incited Cambridge's blacks to riot in July, 1967.

28. *Afro-American*, 13 April 1968.

29. In statistical terms, I am not proposing that the Baltimore ministers' distribution of political/community activity shifted leftward. More precisely, I maintain that after King's death and the riots the distribution skewed leftward—that the median level of community activity was higher for preachers after King's death. Although after King's assassination and the riots there were still many preachers who were relatively inactive, the average preacher became more active during this period.

30. *Afro-American*, 20 July 1985.

31. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross*, p. 591. King had been planning a Poor People's March, and he had gone to Memphis to support striking sanitation workers. For more on King's campaign for economic equality in America, see *ibid.*, pp. 579–624.

32. *Afro-American*, 25 August 1977.

33. *Sun*, 10 October 1981.

34. *Afro-American*, 25 August 1977.

35. Charles Tilley, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, pp. 133–42, discusses community mobilization in terms of responses to threats and opportunities, stressing that opportunity/threat affects all members of a particular group equally and that this group mobilizes en masse in response to these stimuli. My study adds a step to Tilley's model. In Baltimore, threats/opportunities had a profound effect on key individuals in the black community (i.e. black ministers) who, in turn, spearheaded the community's mobilization.



Cambridge civil rights leader Gloria Richardson entering magistrate's court, 13 May 1963. Full photograph on p. 301. (By permission of the Hearst Corporation.)

Civil War on Race Street: The Black Freedom Struggle and White Resistance in Cambridge, Maryland, 1960–1964

PETER B. LEVY

The Cambridge experience is not merely of local interest. On the contrary, the factors which have created the crisis . . . are present in practically every place in the United States where there is a sizeable Negro population. It is only the convergence of a number of these factors which has made the crisis come earlier and more intensely than in other areas.

Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee, 1963

Suppose, for argument's sake, that you were to have visited Cambridge, population thirteen thousand, as the 1960s dawned. Approaching the town, you would have noted a sign that read: "Cambridge isn't just any place, it's a people making progress." Your first impression of the community, the county seat of Dorchester County on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, probably would have corroborated this boast. The city is a modern-day "Shangri-La," declared the *Baltimore News-American*. "Everybody seems happy. There's plenty of work, good wages for all." The travel section of the *New York Times* described Cambridge as a "picturesque . . . dreamy old town," with stately mansions, busy wharves, and tasty seafood.¹

Though Cambridge had a Southern look and feel, the city was not of the Deep South. Ever since the Civil War, it had been tied economically to the North, via the railroad lines that ran from New York, Philadelphia, and Wilmington and then down the Delmarva peninsula. African Americans continued to vote after Reconstruction, and since the turn of the century one of Cambridge's five town councilmen had been black. The city police included black officers—Cambridge integrated its force before Baltimore did—and the local school board had passed a plan to desegregate the schools shortly after the *Brown* decision in 1954. Moreover, the local economy revolved around manufacturing, not cotton farming. No wonder that a federally funded documentary film, narrated by newscaster Chet Huntley, called Cambridge a "model city" in terms of interracial relations.²

A Towson resident, Professor Levy teaches United States history at York College, York, Pennsylvania.

If you were to have returned to Cambridge in the late spring of 1964, however, you would have encountered a radically different place. By then Cambridge had attained the reputation as “the most violent place in America. . . . A cauldron of hate,” in *Time* magazine’s words. In a strong pro-civil rights address, President John F. Kennedy singled out Cambridge’s civil rights activists for having “lost sight” of what they were demonstrating about. Even those who had participated in the midst of the fiercest civil rights battles in the Deep South found the scene in Cambridge unbelievable. Bill Jones, George Wallace’s top aide, commented, “It seemed impossible to me that this was America—the land of the free. It reminded me of driving into German towns in World War II.” Likewise, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) leaders Cleveland Sellers and Stokeley Carmichael observed, “By the time we got to town, Cambridge blacks had stopped extolling the virtues of passive resistance. Guns were carried as a matter of course and it was understood that they would be used.” Only the presence of the National Guard, which arrived in Cambridge in June, 1963 and remained there (with only one brief respite) for more than a year, kept the city from exploding into civil war.³

What transformed Cambridge from a pleasant village into a cauldron of hate? What accounted for the rapid breakdown of social order? Along the same lines, why Cambridge? Were its citizens more bigoted than those who lived in communities that did not experience such turmoil? Did outside agitators or irresponsible activists cause the trouble, as many local whites and journalists claimed? Or was the local business elite responsible because it failed to provide adequate leadership? Moreover, in what ways was Cambridge’s experience similar or dissimilar to that of other communities?

In ten leading works on the modern civil rights movement, Cambridge has received only passing mention. Only one book, Anthony Lewis’s *Portrait of a Decade* (1964), devoted more than a paragraph to Cambridge between 1960 and 1965. One study even mistook Cambridge, Maryland, for Cambridge, Massachusetts. Most studies discussing Cambridge at all focus on events that took place there in 1967, namely H. Rap Brown’s notorious speech encouraging blacks to “get some guns” and to burn the town down. Studies of Maryland or of the Eastern Shore have not added much to our understanding of the disturbances there. They tend to rely on limited research (almost entirely on a few national newspaper reports), lack independent verification, and in some cases contain gross inaccuracies.⁴

Might it be that the early civil rights movement in Cambridge, Maryland, has been ignored because most historians of the movement have focused on Martin Luther King Jr., who never slept in Cambridge? Might it be that Cambridge has received little attention since it poorly fits into the traditional description of the civil rights movement, one which started in the Deep South, focused on civil and political rights, was fought nonviolently, and then, after 1965, moved North and became violent? Or have historians brushed Cambridge aside because its story does not mesh well with the argument that the 1960s was a period of racial progress?⁵

Leading scholars recently have called for a reinterpretation of the “civil rights years,” one based upon an examination of the movement from a community or local

perspective. Such studies promise to move us beyond the notion that national leaders orchestrated the movement in order to achieve congressional civil rights legislation. Rather than being "narrowly aimed at obtaining legal victories from the federal government," the argument goes, we will see that its aim was nothing less than the creation of "new social identities," or the empowerment of men and women whose sense of self and personhood had been degraded or stunted by years of repression.⁶ Local studies may also reveal that "the victories won by protests were less dramatic and less complete" than they often appear to have been. "If one were to make a documentary film of the civil rights struggle in Greensboro or Montgomery or St. Augustine or Tuskegee" (four communities for which case studies exist), one historian has observed, "the narrative line would be exceedingly long, exhaustively crooked, and extensively smudged." Local studies, these authors add, will also allow historians to better understand why the movement developed when it did and why certain communities erupted while others did not.⁷ This study contributes to the effort to understand the movement at the grass roots level.



Based on the election results of 1960 and the tone of the campaign, Cambridge citizens displayed little concern with racial matters. Unlike many small towns throughout the South, the desegregation of schools was not a major issue. Hardly any discussion of the sit-ins, including some in nearby Princess Anne and Salisbury, took place. Indeed, extensive interviews conducted at the time by George R. Kent suggested that even the bulk of the black community remained content with the city's black and white moderate leadership.⁸

The issue that most concerned Cambridge's citizens was the economy, which rested insecurely on the Phillips Packing Company. Formed in 1907 by Cambridge natives Albanus Phillips, Levi Phillips, and W. G. Winterbottom, Phillips dominated the economic and political life of Cambridge for the first half of the twentieth century, sustaining good profits even during the Depression. At its peak, from 1944 to 1947, the company operated some twenty plants and employed more than four thousand workers, about half of them in Cambridge, the rest in other locations on the Delmarva peninsula. Everyone in Cambridge either worked for Phillips or knew someone who did. Phillips produced over fifty varieties of canned foods, primarily vegetables, including one-eighth of all of the canned tomatoes in America. As a leading supplier of K-rations, Phillips during World War II employed between one thousand and four thousand workers a year, about one-half of them in one of its eleven Cambridge plants, and enjoyed sales that reached the \$27 million mark. The company had sustained high profits immediately after the war.

From 1947 to 1957, however, Phillips's fortunes declined. The firm's reputation as a fierce opponent to unions led to an AFL boycott of Phillips products. Changes in the food processing industry, from the introduction of frozen foods to mergers and market consolidations, played a role in the downturn. More diversified firms survived this restructuring; Phillips, which saw its earnings plummet from a high of



Deteriorating housing in Cambridge's second ward. (Permission of the Hearst Corporation.)

\$3.64 a share in 1947 to a low of \$.02 a share in 1956, did not. Consolidated Foods, headquartered in Chicago, acquired control of Phillips in 1957. By that time the Phillips payroll and profits had shrunk considerably.⁹

Nonetheless, as the election of Calvin Mowbray to the post of mayor revealed, Cambridge's citizenry believed that it could overcome these difficulties with the help of enlightened leadership. Mowbray, a former president of the chamber of commerce and an officer with Consolidated Food, easily defeated Osvrey Pritchett, a plumbing supplier, by promising to build on the efforts of Cambridge's business elite. This elite was in the midst of a campaign to recruit new industries to the region. This campaign had already begun to pay off. At no point did either Mowbray or his opponent suggest that racial matters would hamper Cambridge's economic revival. On the contrary, Mowbray, who won the vast majority of the black vote, presumed that Cambridge's reputation as a progressive community would allow it to continue to attract new business. The volunteer fire company's decision to build the largest private swimming pool on the East Coast may further have reflected the local belief that the town was on the road to economic recovery.¹⁰

Such faith in continued economic improvement carried through 1961. As the Cambridge *Daily Banner* reported in its end-of-the-year issue, "By almost any barometer, 1961 was a good year for the community. Unemployment was down.

New industry produced new jobs. Retail merchants rang up record sales." Moreover, the paper continued, "the prospect of exciting growth faced the community. An expanded port, more industrial plants, dualization of Route 50, a city beltway. . . ." Nowhere in this year-end review did the paper mention civil rights or racial problems in Cambridge. During the year the paper had condemned white supremacists and suggested that Cambridge could never experience racial turmoil.¹¹ Few in Cambridge knew that freedom rides with their town's name on them were being organized by the Civic Interest Group (CIG) of Baltimore, SNCC, and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE).

Cambridge became a target of these rides by an accident of history. In the summer and fall of 1961, after several restaurants along Route 40 north of Baltimore had refused to serve African diplomats, civil rights activists had planned freedom rides in protest. Because these incidents deeply embarrassed the Kennedy administration, which was trying hard to establish good relations with a number of newly independent and unaligned African nations, it pressured restaurants along Route 40 to serve blacks. Maryland's Democratic governor, J. Millard Tawes (a native of the Eastern Shore), supported the Kennedy administration by agreeing to sponsor civil rights legislation in the General Assembly.¹² In response to these measures, civil rights forces agreed to call off the Route 40 freedom rides. Rather than disband, however, they decided to train their sights on nearby facilities along Route 50, which connected Washington and Annapolis to the Eastern Shore and ran through Cambridge on its way to Ocean City. Crisfield, Governor Tawes's home town, and Salisbury, the site of an infamous lynching in the 1930s, became two of the first communities that the riders tested. When these protests took place without significant incident—Salisbury, for instance, agreed to appoint a bi-racial human-relations commission—the riders turned their attention to Cambridge.¹³

William Hansen, a twenty-two-year-old white student from Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Reginald Robinson, a black student from Washington, D.C., both SNCC field representatives, arrived in Cambridge a week before the scheduled protests. A veteran of the freedom rides in the Deep South (fellow activists observed that he often became the target of mob attacks because he was white), Hansen was deeply committed to the philosophy of nonviolence.

Hansen and Robinson took up residence with Herbert St. Clair, whose nephew Frederick St. Clair, a bail bondsman, had first suggested during the Crisfield freedom rides that the activists come to Cambridge. Two days after arriving, Charles Cornish, the black representative on the town council, invited Hansen and Robinson to meet with the city council and Cambridge's Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC). At the meeting, council and EOC members sought to convince the freedom riders to call off the protest. They argued that Cambridge had black policemen, had devised a plan for desegregating the schools, and enjoyed good race relations. Hansen and Robinson retorted that the black policemen could not arrest whites without special permission, that even though a plan existed to desegregate the schools as of 1962 no blacks had attended any of the white schools, and that the city's EOC was a fraud. When council members countered that Cambridge's main

restaurants served both blacks and whites, Hansen and Robinson replied that, in fact, only five of eighteen served blacks, and that one of the members of the EOC owned a factory that did not employ blacks. Someone had tutored Hansen and Robinson well, and the meeting with the EOC did not convince them to call off the freedom rides.¹⁴

On Saturday, 13 January 1962, approximately one hundred civil rights activists sought to use various facilities in and around Cambridge in an integrated manner. A little over half of the protesters (whom the local paper called “freedom raiders”) came from Maryland State College, one of the state’s historically black colleges in Princess Anne, or were members of CORE, CIG, SNCC, or the NAACP. The other half lived in Cambridge. Reginald Robinson described the scene:

The streets of Cambridge were lined with a great many jeering whites. Negroes also crowded the streets. . . . A number of incidents happened all over the downtown area. Picketers were shoved and jostled quite frequently. The most serious incident happened at the Choptank Inn. Bill [Hansen] and another demonstrator were the only two who got inside the restaurant. On the outside . . . a crowd of about 150 very hostile whites gathered. Approximately fifty near-hysterical people were on the inside. . . . The mob on the inside converged on Bill and started beating him. He was thrown bodily out of the door. He got up and entered the restaurant again. This time he was knocked down again, and kicked out of the door. When he tried to enter a third time he was again knocked down. At this juncture he was arrested for disorderly conduct, by a state policemen who had been standing nearby watching the entire proceeding.¹⁵

In the aftermath of the first ride, local elites—from the editor of Cambridge’s newspaper to the mayor—railed at the “outside agitators” for stirring up trouble. The Cambridge *Daily Banner* described Hansen as a professional integrationist who had no knowledge of Cambridge’s progressive racial record. The newspaper repeated the EOC’s list of Cambridge’s “accomplishments” and warned that the protestors jeopardized “four decades of bi-racial progress in Cambridge.” Nowhere did these voices acknowledge that Hansen and Robinson had met with the EOC or that they had denied claims that Cambridge enjoyed good race relations.¹⁶

The reception the riders received in the black community belied any view that they had stirred up placid people and undercut racial progress. About three hundred men and women attended a mass meeting at St. Luke’s A.M.E. Church following the rides. On the following Monday, scores of students from the all-black Mace Lane High School showed their solidarity with the activists by walking out of their afternoon classes to attend the riders’ court hearings. The Reverend John Ringold summarized the views of many of those present:

It has been reported that “until the outsiders came to Cambridge the colored people were satisfied.” I ask, “satisfied” with what? The truth is that we have never been satisfied and unrest has been mounting for several years. . . . Something or someone was needed to stir the people to action and move

them to reveal that dissatisfaction. The inspiration was brought by the first rally of the Freedom Riders.¹⁷

Hansen and Robinson organized two more freedom rides during the month of January, each a little larger than the previous one. Violence erupted again at the Choptank Inn on 20 January, when a white mob kicked Hansen into unconsciousness. After he regained his wits, the mob shoved him through a glass door, knocking him unconscious a second time. Police then arrested him for trespassing.¹⁸

The rides had little impact on the town's commercial facilities, as none desegregated. Yet they had a considerable impact on Cambridge African Americans, who attended mass meetings on a regular basis and encouraged their fellow citizens to speak out. James Shields declared that the protesters were "doing something that our people should have done a hundred years ago. Some day our children will be able to say, 'I wish my father could have lived as I do.'" As a result of the freedom rides, Cambridge's black activists formed the Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee (CNAC) and rejuvenated a moribund branch of the NAACP.¹⁹

This burst of activity may have seemed to spring from thin air, but in fact it built on a number of small steps that the African-American community already had taken. Though Cambridge's black ministers proved reluctant openly to support the freedom riders, their churches provided a base or staging ground for mobilizing church members. When the churches closed their doors, blacks met at the Elks Lodge, another all-black institution. In addition, many of Cambridge's black citizens had served in the military in World War II or Korea and returned to Cambridge resolved to demand full citizenship. The *Brown* decision fortified this feeling; the failure of the nation and Cambridge to implement it stirred them further.²⁰

Activism in Cambridge also built upon the resources and leadership of Cambridge's most prominent black family, the St. Clairs. Comfortable enough to be free from economic pressure and enjoying the respect of the black community, the St. Clairs played a seminal role in the Cambridge civil rights movement. Herbert "Maynadier" St. Clair had served on the town council for nearly forty years in the first half of the twentieth century. The family may have gained additional advantage because in the early 1960s no St. Clair held political office; none could be identified with or blamed for any disturbing racial or economic developments.²¹

The family member who played the most important role was Gloria Richardson. Granddaughter of Herbert St. Clair and cousin of Frederick Douglass St. Clair (the bail bondsman who first invited the Freedom Riders to Cambridge), Richardson had graduated from Howard University with a degree in sociology in 1942. At Howard she had studied with E. Franklin Frazier, Rayford Logan, and Highland Lewis—three contemporary giants of black scholarship. They had helped shape her views of race relations, perhaps prompting her to reject the privileges of the black bourgeoisie and certainly raising her own self-esteem. She returned to Cambridge expecting to find a job in her field. Instead she ran smack into the color barrier: Cambridge did not employ black social workers. She had found only menial work,

and this personal experience with racism, combined with experiences that even her "elite" family had encountered, intensified her resolve to fight for full equality.²²

Under the leadership of Richardson and Enez Grubb, a Cambridge resident who briefly had worked for CORE, CNAC expanded the scope of its protests. It enlarged its boycott of white-owned businesses, held voter registration and education drives, and pushed the school board to speed up its desegregation plan. CNAC also affiliated with SNCC, becoming the only adult-run branch of this student-based group. Most importantly, Richardson built CNAC into one of the few civil rights organizations in the country with strong support from poor or working-class blacks. One way Richardson did so was by shunning the conciliatory or "Tomish" black leaders of Cambridge, such as councilman Charles Cornish, Edythe Jolley (principal of Mace Lane High School), and Helen Waters, the black representative on the county-wide school board and proprietress of a beauty parlor catering to whites only. Richardson also won support through the sheer strength of her personality, a trait that both her supporters and detractors highlighted.²³

If the local white elite had negotiated an agreement to desegregate public accommodations, if it had convinced the school board to speed up the desegregation of schools, or if it had demonstrated a desire to treat blacks as equals, then Cambridge's history might have turned out differently. But it did not. Despite the obvious need for housing aid, a plan to apply to the federal government for public housing got nowhere because of a squabble between the county commissioners and the town government. As late as January, 1963, Mayor Mowbray refused to ask the town council to pass some sort of public accommodations law, even though several Eastern Shore communities already had done so. The school board did not budge on its desegregation plan, contending that the schools were open if blacks would only apply. Richardson contended that other blacks did not apply because they feared economic and other reprisals; in the fall of 1962 her daughter Donna had applied to and was admitted to the previously all-white high school, but less than two weeks later she had left because of the open hostility of white students, teachers, and staff. Rather than acknowledge flaws in the desegregation plan or race relations in general, School Superintendent James G. Busick and other white officials blamed the turmoil in the community solely on outside agitators. If the freedom riders would just leave, or if Richardson would just act reasonably, they contended, Cambridge would peacefully work out its racial problems.²⁴

To make matters worse, the black unemployment rate remained abysmal, above 20 percent—more than twice as high as that for Cambridge's whites and four times the national average. Although most of the town's factories were officially integrated, quite often blacks could obtain only jobs like custodianships. About 19 percent of African Americans in Cambridge lived in homes that had sound plumbing (compared to more than 80 percent of the white population). The median value of homes owned by blacks was half that of homes owned by whites, and only a bit over a quarter of all of Cambridge's blacks owned a home at all, compared to over 55 percent of white families.²⁵ Several of Cambridge's poor put the meaning of these conditions in human terms. James Sloan, an unemployed Korean War

veteran, stated: "Here, if you are a colored person and go looking for a job, they tell you they only want skilled workers. If you have the particular skill the vacancy suddenly 'has been filled.'" Henry James added: "Things for us can't get any worse. We have nothing to lose and maybe something to gain by backing them [activists]. I don't have anything but time and my life to give to the movement. I'm willing to give both if necessary."²⁶

A statewide fight for civil rights legislation exacerbated the situation in Cambridge. Early in 1962 Governor Tawes called a special session of the assembly to consider a public accommodations law (such a bill would outlaw racial discrimination in inns, hotels, restaurants, and the like). Opponents of the bill included the entire Eastern Shore contingent, led by the chair of the senate judiciary committee, Cambridge's own Frederick C. Malkus Jr., who had first sat in the House of Delegates in 1947. Malkus and his allies watered down the measure by adding a provision allowing counties to exempt themselves from the statute. After the governor signed the measure, Eastern Shoremen led a drive to repeal it via a referendum—despite the fact that they remained exempt from it.²⁷ The Cambridge police and fire departments reinforced racial antagonisms. The firemen, who included some of Cambridge's most outspoken critics of CNAC, served as a constant affront to the black community. An all-volunteer and all-white organization, the fire department operated a segregated skating rink and swimming pool. Despite the fact that it received tax dollars from both black and white citizens, it rebuffed all attempts to desegregate either facility. Hence blacks swam only in the polluted Choptank River, where nearly every season one or two of them drowned.²⁸



The day before Martin Luther King Jr. and SCLC launched Project C in Birmingham, Alabama, CNAC in Cambridge commenced a new phase of its own protests. Sparked in part by the Dorsett Theater's decision to limit seating of African Americans to the back half of the balcony (until then they had enjoyed access to the entire balcony) and by a combative meeting that CNAC held with the city council (Richardson believed that Mayor Mowbray and Councilman Cornish both had insulted her), the demonstrations took place first on a weekly and then on a daily basis. Like their counterparts in Birmingham, activists in Cambridge gathered at churches in the black section of town, marched downtown singing freedom songs, knelt down for prayer and then, assuming there were no arrests, returned to church for another meeting. Even more so than SCLC in Birmingham, CNAC augmented its marches by picketing segregated establishments and testing facilities. When arrested, the activists often chose jail over bail. "It was the goal of CNAC," Richardson explained, "to show, through the medium of direct action, the desperate need to eliminate discrimination." Local high school students, often organized by Donna Richardson, and students from Swarthmore, Morgan State, and other regional colleges and universities, constituted the bulk of the demonstrators.²⁹

Unlike Birmingham, Cambridge's blacks protested in relative anonymity until May, 1963. Without the attraction of either Dr. King or Bull Connor, they failed to gain national headlines. As in Birmingham, the town's leaders demanded that the activists call off the protests, claiming that they would not negotiate while threatened by violence. Cambridge continued to chide demonstrators for undoing years of racial progress, reciting the usual litany of achievements.³⁰

This stage of the demonstrations climaxed with the "penny trials." On 7 May 1963 fifty-four civil rights activists including Gloria Richardson were tried together in Dorchester County Circuit Court by Judge W. Laird Henry, Jr., one of the city's most distinguished and prominent whites and the son of a judge and congressman. (Local myth had the Henrys and St. Clairs related by blood.) The trial itself followed negotiations between the defense and plaintiff's attorneys in which the defendants agreed to waive their right to individual jury trials. After hearing a brief summary of the evidence, Henry found forty-seven of the defendants guilty of one count of disorderly conduct and seven of the defendants guilty of two counts of disorderly conduct. After dismissing all of the remaining charges, Henry fined each defendant one penny and then suspended their sentences. More importantly, in the midst of the proceedings, Henry reprimanded the activists for their deplorable behavior. "Your time," Judge Henry informed the college students, "would be more profitably spent in your books than in . . . making nuisances of yourselves." After finishing his lecture to the college youths, Henry denounced Richardson as a disgrace to her family's good name. Cambridge is trying hard "to do what is good for you and your people," Henry intoned. "Do you know of any other community in this area making greater strides in integration than Cambridge?" To which Richardson replied, "You are not going to like this but I think far greater progress is being made in Salisbury." Given Salisbury's poor reputation on racial matters, Richardson knew that this remark would pique Henry.³¹

Henry's preaching failed to achieve its goal, namely the restoration of peace and order in Cambridge. Protests continued, and riots nearly erupted at the Dorsett Theater, the Recreational Center, and Dizzyland—a local hangout for white high school students located at the corner of Race and Gay streets. These riots were averted when Judge Henry again intervened, this time by forming the Committee for Interracial Understanding (CIU), a group made up of some of the town's most powerful figures. Under Henry's direction, the CIU convinced CNAC to call for a temporary moratorium on sit-ins (though not the boycott). The CIU met with white business leaders and CNAC activists. It also attempted to meet with local restaurant owners. This entreaty backfired when but a handful of them agreed even to attend the meeting and those who did claimed they would desegregate only if the majority of restaurants did so as well.³²

Meanwhile, Cambridge's authorities arrested two young local black activists, Dwight Cromwell and Dinez White, charged them with disorderly conduct, and threw them in jail without bail. Their actual offense was praying outside a bowling alley (William LeCompte, owner of the alley, publicly proclaimed the praying done in an orderly manner). Judge E. McMaster Duer sentenced the two youths to an



Prisoners entering magistrate's court for their hearing, 13 May 1963. Gloria Richardson is on the steps. '(By permission of the Hearst Corporation.)

indefinite term in the state institution for juvenile delinquents. Before receiving her sentence, Dinez White wrote her own "Letter From a Jail Cell," which, like Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail Cell," urged on her fellow activists. "They think they have you scared because they are sending us away," she wrote. "Please fight for freedom and let us know that we are not going away in vain."³³ On the same day that Duer sentenced White and Cromwell, the Maryland Commission on Interracial Problems and Relations, which had rushed to Cambridge with the hope of averting further turmoil, issued a pessimistic report on the situation. It uncovered virtually no middle ground and blamed small businessmen and poor whites for much of the trouble. Nearly simultaneously, Judge Henry disbanded the Committee on Interracial Understanding, because, in his words, no progress was in sight.³⁴

Coming one on top of another, these events sparked a riot. From 11 through 14 June guns were fired, buildings were set on fire, and several whites were shot. Events were so out of control on the fourteenth that the town council and the mayor felt compelled to call the governor and request the dispatch of the National Guard. Governor Tawes immediately complied. Approximately five hundred guardsmen rushed into town, and three times that number readied themselves for possible



Gloria Richardson, Reginald Robinson, Philip Savage of the NAACP, and others on a freedom march in Cambridge, 12 June 1963. (Permission of the Hearst Corporation.)

action. Armed with bayonets and equipped with rifles and tear gas, the soldiers established martial law and encamped themselves on Cambridge's main artery, ironically named Race Street. Race Street actually divided the black second ward from the white wards of Cambridge. Historically, residential segregation had provided one of the main means for maintaining social order. In the summer of 1963, however, only the military could do so.³⁵

In the aftermath of the mid-June riots the town council offered to pass an amendment to the charter, making discrimination illegal in the town's hotels, inns, and restaurants. CNAC rejected this offer, noting that city voters could and would put such an amendment to referendum and that, even if it passed, the amendment would not go into effect until November, 1964. In its place, CNAC called upon officials to rescind the county's exemption from the state public accommodations bill and pass such an ordinance, which would not be subject to referendum. Mayor Mowbray refused. At the same time, CNAC's leaders met with Assistant United States Attorney General Burke Marshall, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, and Governor Tawes. As a result, Maryland's state board of education agreed to pressure the local school board to scrap its gradual desegregation plan for one that would completely desegregate the schools in the fall of 1963. The Kennedy admini-



Gloria Richardson, CNAC, and Reginald Robinson, SNCC, speak with a reporter on 12 June 1963, during the turmoil in Cambridge. (Permission of the Hearst Corporation.)

stration gave the federally funded employment bureau permission to hire a black interviewer in Cambridge. Marshall hinted that the federal government would channel money to several local establishments like Airpax, a minor defense contractor, which in turn could lead to new jobs.³⁶

On 2 July the town council unanimously passed a charter amendment. A week later the National Guard departed from town. No sooner had it left, however, than CNAC initiated a new round of demonstrations. At one of the protest sites the owner of Dizzyland, Robert Fehsenfeld knocked Eric Dickerson to the ground and cracked a raw egg over his head, an act that gained Fehsenfeld and Cambridge front page coverage in the *New York Times* (a white native of Cambridge, Dickerson had joined CNAC early in 1962). The following day, CNAC returned to Dizzyland and several other segregated establishments. White mobs attacked the demonstrators. In response, CNAC staged a night-time mass march to the downtown courthouse, where some of that day's protestors were being held. Afterwards, they returned to the second ward. While the city averted violence on this occasion, tensions and anger remained extremely high.³⁷

On 12 July, a white mob once again attacked demonstrators at Dizzyland. A *New York Times* reporter described the scene:

About 200 Negroes rushed to the aid of six white and Negro demonstrators who were being beaten up in the restaurant by white patrons. . . . The police

made no attempt to enter the restaurant until the Negro crowd rushed across the street and tried to break the door down. The door had been locked from the inside. As the Negroes swarmed towards the restaurant several of them . . . sent up a cry: "They're getting them. My God, They're getting them." As the Negroes tried to break down the door, white spectators moved up and for nearly 10 minutes the intersection was filled by a milling, punching mob.

That same evening 250-plus civil rights demonstrators staged a "freedom walk" to the courthouse, where they encountered a white mob of about seven hundred, itself there to demand the release of a white man who had been arrested during that afternoon's melee. The whites pelted the civil rights demonstrators with rocks and eggs. As darkness fell, the violence escalated. A carload of whites drove through the second ward and exchanged shotgun blasts with the residents. White businesses were set on fire; stones were thrown through the window of Helen Waters's home, most likely by militant blacks. George Collins, a writer for the Baltimore *Afro-American*, wrote, "For what seemed like an eternity the second ward was a replica of the Old West as men and boys of all ages roamed the streets, stood in the shadows, and leaned out of windows with their weapons in full view." By dawn more than twelve people had been shot. It was only through an "act of God," Collins added, that no one was killed. In the midst of the violence, the governor ordered the National Guard to return to Cambridge.³⁸

Even before this new round of violence, the Kennedy administration had expanded its mediation efforts. On 9 July Gloria Richardson attended a White House function with leaders of three hundred other women's organizations. Before joining the group, she met privately with Maceo Hubbard, a long-time civil rights lawyer and the top black official in the justice department. At the same time, Gen. George Gelston, commander of the troops in Cambridge, state attorney general Thomas Finan, and members of the Maryland Humans Relations Commission conferred with local black and white leaders. On 22 July, the federal government's efforts culminated with Robert Kennedy's announcement that representatives of the black community, Cambridge, the state, and the justice department had signed an agreement whereby CNAC would suspend protests in exchange for "material and tangible" reforms. Those reforms included establishment of a human relations commission, of which four blacks were to be members; the hiring of a black as an interviewer by the local branch of the Maryland Department of Employment Security; amendment of the city charter making it illegal to discriminate against individuals because of their race in public accommodations; the speeding up of desegregation in the schools; and the building of public housing. The agreement met most, if not all, of the concrete demands that CNAC had made when it first appeared on the scene in 1962 and that the town council had refused (or been unable) to implement as late as May, 1963.³⁹



Federal, state, and local officials mark the signing of the "Cambridge Agreement," 23 July 1963. From left, Maryland attorney general Thomas B. Finan, Gloria Richardson, Robert F. Kennedy, and Cambridge mayor Calvin W. Mowbray. (Permission of the Hearst Corporation.)



Signing of the agreement, however, did not end Cambridge's racial problems. Nearly all of the parties involved realized that the agreement rested on precarious ground, especially since segregationists in the community had declared they would challenge the city's charter amendment via referendum. At no time did this segment of the community withdraw its opposition to measures restricting private businesses. Indeed, within a month segregationists had collected 1,700 signatures supporting the referendum—more than half of all registered white voters in Cambridge and far more than the nine hundred signatures needed to place the charter amendment on the ballot. Not surprisingly, a number of restaurant owners, other small businessmen, and members of the Cambridge Rescue and Fire Company spearheaded the petition drive and referendum campaign.⁴⁰

Cambridge's elite white leadership, operating as the Cambridge Citizens Committee, led the effort to defeat the referendum and thus uphold the anti-discrimination amendment. Headed by Arnold Deane, owner of the Cambridge *Daily Banner*; William Hart, president of the local Chamber of Commerce; J. Edward Walter,

Cambridge postmaster; and Levi Phillips, Jr., an attorney and son of one of the co-founders of the Phillips Packing Company, the committee emphasized that passage of the referendum would threaten the "economic welfare of the city." To drive home this point, Mayor Mowbray sent a letter to every individual who had signed the pro-referendum petition. In it he declared that continued strife would cost Cambridge jobs.⁴¹

During the final days of the campaign, tensions grew worse. Pro-petition forces countered Mayor Mowbray's personal letter with large advertisements in the *Daily Banner*, one of which posed the rhetorical question, "Where Do You Draw the Line on Forced Integration?" First would come integrated public accommodations, the ad prophesied, then integration would invade churches, public schools, private schools, private businesses, social gatherings, marriages, and even residences. At first opponents of open accommodations had not relied on such appeals, preferring instead to emphasize individual and property rights. Fearing a loss at the polls, it ultimately decided to invoke simple prejudice. Senator Malkus intensified racial polarization in the community by participating with Alabama governor George Wallace in a debate on civil rights at Goucher College in Towson. Wallace, the national symbol of white supremacy, and Malkus denounced pending federal civil rights legislation as un-American. Throwing fuel on the fire, Malkus blamed Gloria Richardson and outsiders for the troubles in Cambridge and claimed that communists and sex perverts had led the March on Washington.⁴²

Shortly after the Goucher debate, a bomb exploded in a black church in Birmingham, Alabama, killing four young black girls. Subsequently, CNAC attempted to stage a memorial march for those killed by the bombing. The National Guard denied them permission to do so. This decision further soured CNAC and Richardson on nonviolence and compromise. Up to this point, Richardson had avoided the accommodations debate. Afterwards, she publicly announced her opposition to the charter amendment and called upon blacks to boycott the election. CNAC supported Richardson, describing the proposed process of gaining equality as illegitimate. "Constitutional rights cannot be given or taken away at the polls. A first-class citizen does not beg for freedom. A first-class citizen does not plead to the white power structure to give him something that the whites have no power to give or take away. Human rights are human rights, not white rights."⁴³

Not surprisingly, Richardson's decision to work against the charter amendment widened the rift between herself and white moderates. It also produced a temporary split among civil rights forces, which heretofore had backed CNAC's militant lead. The Reverend Theasdar Murray, president of the local chapter of the NAACP, criticized Richardson for sending the wrong message to moderates who had stuck their necks out for blacks. Moving beyond words, Murray and most of Cambridge's other black ministers refused to allow CNAC to use their churches. Murray, Charles Cornish, and Mayor Mowbray also suggested that personal goals rather than principle motivated Richardson. Much of the national press echoed this charge.⁴⁴

On 2 October Cambridge voters repealed the charter amendment; 1,994 (53.6 percent of participants) voted against equal public accommodations, 1,720 for it.

The anti-amendment referendum passed in every white ward of the city, winning more than 80 percent of the vote in the white, blue-collar fourth ward. Eighty-five out of one hundred registered whites voted, the highest turnout in Cambridge history. Nearly 95 percent of voters in the black second ward supported the amendment, yet only one in two registered black voters went to the polls.⁴⁵

Richardson's and CNAC's impact upon the black vote is hard to gauge. If blacks had turned out to vote in the same proportion as whites and if nearly all of them had voted against the referendum, it would have failed; public accommodations would have withstood the segregationist test. But we cannot assume that those who chose not to vote stayed home at Richardson's urging, and in any event the African-American presence at the polls owed much to CNAC's successful voter-registration drives in 1962 and 1963.

Local elites laid blame for the amendment's demise solely on Richardson. So, too, did nearly all national moderate and liberal commentators—despite the fact that a large majority of whites voted against making discrimination in public accommodations illegal. *Time* magazine called Richardson a “zealot.” Writing for the *Saturday Evening Post*, Robert Liston proclaimed that she merely sought to further her “power and fame.” Murray Kempton made the same point in the *New Republic*. Anthony Lewis, in one of the first and otherwise favorable histories of the civil rights movement, lambasted Richardson for betraying the principles of nonviolence. Lewis contended that since the Supreme Court had not yet established that individuals had a legal right to demand service at a restaurant, Richardson did not have a leg to stand on (of course, by the same reasoning Rosa Parks should have given up her seat on that historic day in Montgomery, Alabama).⁴⁶

Richardson and the CNAC claimed that the right to be served at a restaurant or hotel was something that blacks were entitled to as human beings. Almost none of the mainstream press or local elites in Cambridge agreed. Nor did the mainstream press publicize CNAC's assertion that the accommodations bill did not even address the main problem, “chronic and widespread unemployment [and] inadequate housing.” In fact, in the summer prior to the vote, CNAC volunteers had conducted a detailed door-to-door study on the concerns of Cambridge's black residents. The study revealed that only 6 percent of Cambridge's black residents considered equal access to public accommodations their top priority. Forty-two percent named unemployment and 26 percent listed housing as their top concerns.⁴⁷

Following the referendum, the gap between moderates and civil rights forces in Cambridge widened. The *Daily Banner* routinely took snipes at both Richardson and CNAC. The newspaper informed readers that Hansen of SNCC had married Ruth Buffington, a black woman; lest readers fail to grasp the significance of this story, the paper observed that the marriage did not take place in the bride's hometown, Pine Bluff, Arkansas, because that state barred interracial marriages. A short while later, Dorchester commissioners refused to cooperate in the federal distribution of surplus food to poor blacks in the county. In the House of Delegates, Richard Mathews presented a quixotic bill that would have punished reporters for writing stories critical of his home district of Cambridge.⁴⁸



Democratic presidential candidate George C. Wallace speaks at Cambridge's Volunteer Rescue and Fire Company's Arena, 11 May 1964. (Permission of the Hearst Corporation.)



On top of this came a visit from Alabama governor George Wallace, who, after performing surprisingly well in Indiana and Wisconsin, had decided to enter the Maryland presidential primary. Wallace's Maryland campaign came to a head 11 May, with an early evening speech that he delivered to a full capacity crowd of upwards of 1,200 whites at the Cambridge Rescue and Fire Company's arena. In the address Wallace emphasized that the real issue at stake was the American way of life. Americans must protect their individual rights, he said, from the encroachment of the federal government. The pending civil rights act threatened them, he continued. If Americans did not draw a line here, they would soon lose their other liberties. Local communities had to fight to protect their autonomy before the federal government's power grew too great to reverse. Those in the arena heartily cheered Wallace's view. It meshed especially well with the views of Cambridge whites who took pride in their individualism and identity as *Shorem*.⁴⁹

Even though in Cambridge Wallace stripped his speech of strident appeals to white supremacy, his appearance served as a lightning rod for civil rights activists from all over the East Coast. Outraged over the community's decision to sponsor his speech, they assembled outside the Fire Company Arena protesting his presence and Cambridge's identification with him. These protests climaxed after Wallace left



Gen. George M. Gelston, Maryland National Guard, orders his men to relax their bayonets after demonstrators agree to halt their march in Cambridge, 12 May 1964. (UPI Telephoto by permission of the Bettmann Archives.)

town, when between four hundred and five hundred blacks encountered an equally large force of National Guardsmen. For nearly a year, CNAC had gotten along well with the Guard under General Gelston. But at this moment Governor Tawes's nephew, not Gelston, commanded the troops. Tawes ordered the protestors to disperse. A tense moment of decision followed, climaxing with Gloria Richardson's resolve that the marchers would not obey his command. "It was a crucial moment, the kind that can make or break a movement," Cleveland Sellers of SNCC recalled. "We all understood that Gloria was the only one who could decide its outcome. If she had told us to return to the lodge, we would have done so, even though we would not have wanted to. 'I'm going through,' she said." No sooner had Richardson stepped forward than the Guard arrested her and whisked her away. Other demonstrators quickly rushed to take her place. Before authorities could arrest them, however, they went limp in the streets. Frustrated, Tawes ordered the Guard to put on their gas masks and spray the demonstrators with tear gas. Chaos followed. Those who did not flee were arrested. A two-year-old black boy who lived in a nearby home died from the effects of the gas. Even though a county coroner later listed congenital heart failure as the cause of death, extremists in Cambridge insisted that blacks were now being gassed to death.⁵⁰

In November, 1963, Wallace won more than 42 percent of the statewide vote in the presidential primary, carrying sixteen of Maryland's twenty-three counties and

all those on the Eastern Shore; he defeated Senator Daniel Brewster (President Johnson's stand-in) by a margin of four to one in Dorchester County, despite the fact that 95 percent of all blacks voted against him.

Meanwhile, the situation in Cambridge remained extremely tense. On several more occasions the National Guard used tear gas to restore order. This new crisis peaked at the end of May, 1964, when the Guard first disallowed and then allowed, under threat of wider protests, black comedian and activist Dick Gregory to hold a "benefit" performance in Cambridge. While this decision placated local blacks, it only further upset local whites, including former white moderates.⁵¹ Mayor Mowbray railed at the National Guard, Governor Tawes, and the Miles Committee (headed by Baltimore civic leader Clarence W. Miles) that Tawes had established to study the situation in Cambridge. Mowbray complained that the press pictured Cambridge whites "as bigots and reactionaries," yet it failed to acknowledge that the radicals had "stopped industrial development," that Richardson was "trying to usurp the duties of elected officials," and that outsiders, not locals, caused the problem in the first place. Police Chief Bryce Kinnanmon declared that the Guard could stop the demonstrations anytime it wanted, simply by arresting all the ringleaders.⁵²

About a month after the presidential primary, Cambridge's voters overwhelmingly elected a slate supported by opponents of integrated public accommodations. Osvrey Pritchett, a former member of the volunteer fire company, soundly defeated Charles Walls, a former official with the Phillips Packing company and a civil rights moderate. Four years earlier Pritchett had lost to Mowbray by nearly a two-to-one margin. This time, 78 percent of Cambridge's voters backed Pritchett. This level of white support made meaningless the nearly unanimous vote that Walls received from African Americans.⁵³ Two and one-half years after the first freedom rides, Cambridge's white voters had spoken. They had elected a man who identified himself with the segregationist cause and who based his campaign on the restoration of "law and order." Protests in the streets, death, the presence of the National Guard—nothing had convinced the community to enact reforms. Not only did poor whites feel this way; so too did moderate and elite whites who, by and large, expressed their anger with black militants for having rejected their lead on the public accommodations charter in the fall of 1963.

Several years of peace followed the July, 1964, mayoral election. When the National Guard left the city shortly afterward, new riots did not erupt. When blacks "tested" restaurants following the passage of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, whites, in general, did not resist. Not surprisingly, many whites credited Pritchett's "law and order" policies with ending the turmoil. At the same time, the restoration of peace allowed whites to reassert their traditional claim that Cambridge had a good racial record and that outside agitators and irresponsible local leaders, namely Gloria Richardson, had caused the trouble in the first place. For whatever reason, the end of protests in Cambridge coincided with Richardson's departure from town. (In the fall of 1964, Richardson remarried and moved to New York City with her new husband, Frank Dandridge, a reporter for the *New York Times*.)⁵⁴

When in July, 1967 Cambridge exploded again, suffering an even worse riot than it had earlier in the decade, white moderates once more blamed their troubles on a single individual, this time the outsider and SNCC chairman H. Rap Brown. Gov. Spiro Agnew charged Brown with having incited the riot by making a fiery speech. Few moderates challenged Agnew's statement, in part because they, too, supposed that individual agitators, not endemic social ills like widespread racism, supplied the primary cause of Cambridge's troubles. (The only difference between moderate and conservative explanations for the turmoil in Cambridge was that, along with Richardson and Brown, moderates blamed the violence on lower-class whites; conservatives did not.)⁵⁵



It is tempting to emphasize the role that individuals played in Cambridge's sad record in race relations during the civil rights era. The evidence suggests that Cambridge's white leaders did not always acquit themselves well, however hard some of them may have tried to pour oil onto the waters of unrest. While they stated concern over racial inequality by supporting the public accommodations amendment, they by and large failed to provide strong leadership, which in turn encouraged poor whites to defend segregation violently. In Salisbury and Princess Anne, where local elites had proposed new reforms at the first appearances of the freedom riders, riots did not erupt. If in the spring of 1963 Cambridge white leaders had granted CNAC's demands to desegregate facilities and supported efforts to improve housing and foster employment, the riots might have been averted. One could similarly argue that, for the sake of unity within the black community and as a sign of good faith to white moderates, Gloria Richardson should have supported the charter amendment and encouraged black voters to make their power evident at the ballot box.

Yet ultimately persons and personalities fail to explain why Cambridge exploded while other communities did not. We should not forget the maxim that people are made by history as much as history is made by people. One cannot say that Cambridge exploded because its citizens were more bigoted or zealous than citizens in other communities.⁵⁶

To understand the civil rights movement in Cambridge we need to reexamine the decline of the Phillips Packing Company and its social-political impact. By the time that the freedom riders arrived, the company employed only a few hundred men and women, a fraction of its earlier payroll. Unemployment in Cambridge ran between 7 and 11 percent for whites and between 20 and 30 percent for blacks. Employment in the packinghouse or canning factories was always highly seasonal, lowest in the late fall, following the tomato harvest, and highest in the spring planting season.

Phillips's situation struck especially hard at the black community. A higher percentage of Cambridge blacks than whites depended on work in the canning factories (other manufacturing employers employed only a token black work force).

African Americans had more trouble than whites obtaining employment in the non-manufacturing segment of Cambridge's economy—most importantly in construction, the oyster industry, and service sector. Unemployment statistics demonstrated this pattern. In 1963 the unemployment rate for white males stood at 7.3 percent and for females at 7.9 percent. For black males and females the rate was nearly four times as high, and black families in Cambridge depended upon the wages of women to a larger degree than did whites.⁵⁷

Of course, Cambridge as a whole experienced tough times during the early 1960s. Earnings for white workers stagnated, and small businesses, including segregated restaurants like Dizzyland, had a difficult time staying afloat. During the freedom rides, white restaurant owners often complained about the precariousness of business conditions, arguing that if they desegregated they would lose white customers and be forced out of business. Some added that, personally, they had no problem with serving black customers, but that since many of their white customers came from the rural countryside and that racism ran deeper there than in the city, they could not afford to do so.⁵⁸

As long as it was strong, the Phillips Company exercised political power in Cambridge much as it did economic might. Augustus Phillips and Levi B. Phillips acted as power brokers in the Maryland Republican party, statewide and locally. They controlled the black vote in Cambridge—blacks generally voted for the party of Lincoln until the 1960s—including selection of the person to fill the black city council post. Gloria Richardson's grandfather regularly cooperated with the Phillipses, taking an anti-union stance during the 1930s in the belief that such fealty would lead to a gradual improvement in the lives of the people he represented.

Evidently without discord, the Phillipses' partner, William Winterbottom, long maintained a leading position in Democratic politics. His name adorned one of the two main Democratic factions in the region, one associated with education and position. The other Democratic faction belonged originally to Emerson C. Harrington, a native of Cambridge who served as governor between 1916 and 1920 (preceding Albert C. Ritchie). The Harrington group portrayed itself as, comparatively speaking, the faction of the people, the workers as opposed to management. Through World War II the Winterbottom faction won nearly every city and county election. It controlled the mayor's office, the town council, judgeships, and the county commissioners.⁵⁹

Phillips's economic decline produced parallel decay in its political power. Delegate Malkus's rise to the state senate in 1950 had come at the expense of Winterbottom's power in the Democratic party: By winning his senate seat, Malkus claimed to have defeated Phillips itself, and he said he did so by convincing the vast majority of the rural or county voters—men and women who made a living hunting muskrats, fishing, or farming—to support him. Malkus's victory opened a new era of transition or flux in municipal politics. Henceforward nearly all elections on the county and city level were hotly contested, with the advantage going to the candidate who shouted the loudest what voters wanted to hear.

Much antagonism among whites during the 1960s grew out of the long rivalry between the Winterbottom and Harrington factions. The fight over the public accommodations amendment to the city charter pitted local elites traditionally belonging to the Winterbottom faction against representatives of the Harrington faction who spoke, or claimed to speak, largely for lower-class whites and shop owners. During the battle over civil rights in Cambridge, small businessmen and white workers did not forget the Phillips Company's long domination of political life in the town. They used the fight over public accommodations as a means to assert themselves. When, during the crisis leading up to the 1963 riots, local restaurant owners refused to negotiate with Judge Laird Henry's committee, they snubbed a symbol of the old Phillips regime.

The decline of the Phillips Company's political fortunes affected blacks as well, unleashing latent rivalries and paving the way for Richardson's emergence as the most prominent black in the community. Such rivalries had begun to emerge even before the freedom riders arrived, as evidenced by a relatively hard-fought town council race between Charles Cornish and William Downs in 1958. Downs ran on a platform of "waking blacks up." He had accused Cornish of practicing an accommodationist approach—the same sort of strategy that Gloria Richardson's grandfather had championed during the Depression (Cornish won, but with diminished support). The Phillips Company's misfortunes created among some blacks a sense that the political situation was ripe for a challenge to the status quo, racial and otherwise. Richardson became the agent and recipient of this discontent.



Thus the instability of economy and politics in Cambridge greatly helps to explain why it became such a flash point of the civil rights movement in Maryland, while other communities, some perhaps with worse race relations, did not. If the Phillips Company had continued to dominate Cambridge life in the 1960s, it is unlikely that the community would have erupted or that the turmoil would have lasted so long. Phillips could have punished blacks who tried to protest the old racial etiquette; white segregationists, fully employed, would not have been so angry or susceptible to the rhetoric of jealousy and hatred.⁶⁰

Cambridge African Americans in the early 1960s did not achieve the great victories that we often ascribe to the civil rights movement in those years, for the struggles of 1963–64 failed to move local whites. Frustration paved the way for another explosion in 1967. This said, the struggles were not for naught; Cambridge's blacks were not simply repressed. The protests prodded the federal government to provide funding for public housing and jobs, and they prepared the way for compliance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The civil rights movement also led to a successful organizing drive by the United Packinghouse Workers at the Coastal Food Plant, thereby overcoming thirty years of resistance by the Phillips Company.⁶¹

On a less tangible level, the movement in Cambridge profoundly affected its participants. Individual blacks in Cambridge took on new identities. They were emboldened by their experience and continued to struggle for change the rest of their lives. Dwight Cromwell, one of the two black youths who was sent to an institution for juvenile delinquents, remained active in the community. He led protests in the late 1960s, organized celebrations of black history in the 1970s, and also took part in legal challenges that insured the full integration of Cambridge's facilities and more equal representation for black citizens in the city's government.

Before the movement, as Howard Schneider, a white native of the region recalled, blacks in Cambridge were invisible. It was easy for middle class whites to claim that Cambridge had a good reputation in terms of race relations because they had little if any genuine communication with the black community. After the early 1960s, however, it became much more difficult to maintain this view. With the movement, blacks threw off the cloak of invisibility.⁶²

NOTES

1. *New York Times*, 11 September 1960; *Baltimore American*, 2 March 1947.
2. *Time*, 19 July 1963, pp. 17-18; *National Review*, 23 August 1967, p. 47; *Ebony*, July 1964, pp. 23-30.
3. *Time*, 11 October 1963, p. 30; William G. Jones, *The Wallace Story* (Northport, Ala.: American Southern Publishing, 1968), p. 281; Cleveland Sellers, *The River of No Return* (New York: William Morrow, 1973), p. 68; *New York Times*, 18 July 1963. Cambridge apparently was occupied by the National Guard for a longer period of time than any other peacetime community in American history.
4. See Thomas Brooks, *Walls Came Tumbling Down* (Englewood: Prentice Hall, 1974); Anthony Lewis, *Portrait of America* (New York: Random House, 1964); Steve Lawson, *Running for Freedom* (Philadelphia: Temple, 1991); Robert Weisbrot, *Freedom Bound* (New York: Norton, 1990); Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988); Juan Williams, *Eyes on the Prize* (New York: Viking, 1987); Mary King, *Freedom Song* (New York: William Morrow, 1987); Manning Marable, *Race, Reform and Rebellion* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1989); Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1981); Rhoda Lois Blumberg, *Civil Rights* (New York: Twayne, 1984); and John R. Wennersten, *Maryland's Eastern Shore: A Journey in Time and Place* (Centreville: Tidewater, 1992).
5. For an example of the traditional coverage of the civil rights movement see Williams, *Eyes on the Prize*, which accompanied the highly acclaimed television film series of the same name. As the jacket on the book proclaimed, "*Eyes on the Prize* affirms and celebrates the unique triumph of this second great American revolution."
6. Clayborne Carson, "The Black Freedom Struggle," in *The Civil Rights Movement in America*, ed. Charles Eagles (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1986), and Armstead L. Robinson and Patricia Sullivan, eds., *New Directions in Civil Rights Studies* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991).

7. The quotation comes from Robert J. Norrell, "One Thing We Did Right: Reflections on the Movement," in *New Directions in Civil Rights Studies*, ed. Robinson and Sullivan. See also J. Mills Thornton III, "Municipal Politics and the Course of the Movement," *ibid*.

8. For an indispensable document on this period see George R. Kent, "The Negro in Politics in Dorchester County, Maryland" (M.A. Thesis, University of Maryland, College Park, 1961). Kent taught at the all-black high school in Cambridge while researching and writing this thesis. See also the Cambridge *Daily Banner* for the months July through December, especially a year-end special, 31 December 1960 and Cambridge Non-Violent Action Committee, The Negro Ward of Cambridge, Maryland: A Study in Change (September 1963; hereafter CNAC Study [1963]), Cambridge Non-Violent Action Committee Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison. One of the main issues of the campaign was whether to repeal an old Sabbath law so that the theater could be operated on Sundays, segregation intact.

9. *Moody's Manual of Investment American and Foreign* (London: Moody's, 1940, 1953, and 1957); Cambridge and Dorchester County Industrial and Business Development and Maryland State Planning Commission, A Program for Economic Development of Dorchester County (1950), CNAC Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; Hobart Taylor Jr. to John E. Nolan Jr., 19 July 1963, in *Civil Rights During the Kennedy Administration, 1961-1963* (47 reels microfilm; Bethesda, Md.: University Publications of America, 1986), part 2, "The Papers of Burke Marshall, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights," reel 26 (hereafter Burke Marshall Papers); Phillips Packing Company, Vertical File, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

10. Cambridge *Daily Banner*, 14 July and 31 December 1960; CNAC Study (1963); Wennersten, *Maryland's Eastern Shore*, ch. 8; author's interview with Frederick C. Malkus Jr., Annapolis, Maryland, 2 February 1993.

11. Cambridge *Daily Banner*, 30 December 1961.

12. George H. Callcott, *Maryland and America, 1940-1980* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), pp. 155-56; *New York Times*, 12 July; 4, 16, 21, and 27 September; 5, 8, 28, and 29 October; and 2 November 1961.

13. William Hansen to Peter Levy, 2 April 1992; author's telephone interview with Gloria Richardson, 21 March 1993.

14. CORE Cambridge Report (1962), *Congress of Racial Equality Papers, 1959-1976* (80 reels microfilm; Bethesda, Md.: University Publication of America, 1984), reel 40 (hereafter CORE Papers).

15. CORE Cambridge Report (1962).

16. *Daily Banner*, 22, 24, 25, 29 January and 2 February 1962.

17. *Afro-American*, 27 January 1962; CNAC Study (1963).

18. *Afro-American*, 27 January 1962; CORE Cambridge Report (1962).

19. *Afro-American*, 27 January 1962 and 10 February 1962; CNAC Study (1963); CORE Cambridge Report (1962).

20. Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Free Press, 1984) and Douglass McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of the Black Insurgency* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

21. Author's telephone interview with Gloria Richardson, 21 March 1993; Annette K. Brock, "Gloria Richardson and the Cambridge Movement," in Vicki L. Crawford, et al., eds., *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), pp. 121–44. The St. Clair family provided money for bail; one of their stores became the headquarters of the Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee (CNAC); their house on High Street served as the unofficial gathering place for freedom riders and sympathetic reporters. Gloria Richardson's daughter was one of the most prominent student activists.

22. Annette K. Brock, "Gloria Richardson and the Cambridge Movement"; author's telephone interview with Gloria Richardson, 21 March 1993; Howard Schneider, "Summer of Fire," *Washington Post Magazine*, 26 July 1992, pp. 18 and 25. Richardson related that her father had received inadequate medical care because the local hospital catered to whites only. She also noted that her grandfather—though a town councilman—was not allowed to dine with his colleagues at official events.

23. "Gloria Richardson," *Ebony*, July 1964, pp. 23–30; Murray Kempton, "Gloria, Gloria," *New Republic* 11 November 1963, pp. 15–17; Robert Liston, "Who Can We Surrender To?" *Saturday Evening Post*, 5 October 1963, pp. 78–80; CNAC Study (1963).

24. *Afro-American*, 15 June 1962 and 20 April 1963; *Daily Banner*, 4 September 1962; WJZ-TV editorial by Herbert Cahan (24 July 1963), Governor J. Millard Tawes Papers (S1041-1530), Maryland State Archives, Annapolis (hereafter Tawes Papers); author's telephone interview with Gloria Richardson, 21 March 1993; Howard Schneider, "Summer of Fire," p. 10.

25. CNAC Study (1963); Hobart Taylor Jr. to John E. Nolan Jr., 19 July 1963, and memo to attorney general, 18 July 1963, both in *Civil Rights in the Kennedy Administration*, reel 26.

26. *Afro-American*, 15 June 1963, p. 24; CNAC, "Study," CNAC Papers.

27. *Daily Banner*, 24 January and 1 and 2 February 1962.

28. Analysis of the Cambridge, Maryland, Disturbances, Office of the Assistant Director of Research, Staff Report No. 4 (Draft), *Civil Rights During the Johnson Administration, 1963–1969* (69 reels microfilm; Bethesda, Md.: University Publications of America, 1985–87), part 1, "White House Central Files and Aides Files," reel 6.

29. CNAC Study (1963).

30. CORE Cambridge Report (1963); *Daily Banner*, 4, 15, 16 and 18 May 1963; Maryland Commission on Interracial Progress and Relations, Report on Racial Situation in Cambridge (12 June 1963), in Tawes Papers, MSA; CNAC Study (1963).

31. *Baltimore Sun*, 8 May 1963. *Cambridge Daily Banner*, 8 May 1963; Brock, "Gloria Richardson and the Cambridge Movement," p. 128.

32. Report on Racial Situation in Cambridge, Tawes Papers, MSA; CORE Cambridge Report (1963); *New York Times*, 5–11 June 1963; *Afro-American*, 18 May and 8 June 1963.

33. White's letter quoted in Schneider, "Summer of Fire," p. 8.

34. CORE Cambridge Report (1963); *New York Times*, 5–11 June 1963; *Afro-American*, 18 May and 8 June 1963; Burke Marshall memorandum (17 June 1963), Burke Marshall Papers.

35. *New York Times*, 11–15 June 1963; *Daily Banner*, 11–15 June 1963; *Afro-American*, 15 June 1963; Governor Tawes press release (14 June 1963), Tawes Papers, MSA.

36. CORE Cambridge Report (1963); Burke Marshall memorandum (17 June 1963), Burke Marshall Papers.

37. *New York Times*, 9 July 1963; *Daily Banner*, 7–12 July 1963; Dwight Campbell report (11 July 1963), *CORE Papers*, reel 21.

38. *New York Times*, 13 July 1963; Dwight Campbell report, *CORE Papers*, reel 21; *Afro-American*, 13 July 1963; Governor Tawes speech (19 July 1963), Tawes Papers, MSA.

39. *Afro-American*, 20 July 1963. For the agreement of 22 July 1963, see *Civil Rights During the Kennedy Administration*, part 2, reel 26.

40. *New York Times*, 24 July 1963; *Daily Banner*, 2, 4, 9 and 10 August 1963.

41. *Daily Banner*, 23 August 1963, 25 and 28 September 1963.

42. *Daily Banner*, 10, 14 and 30 September 1963.

43. *Afro-American*, 28 September 1963; *Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee Papers, 1959–1972* (72 reels of microfilm; Sanford, N.C.: Microfilming Corp. of America, 1982), reel 15; CNAC Statement (1963) and Gloria Richardson press release, both in Burke Marshall Papers; CNAC Study (1963).

44. *Daily Banner*, 28 September 1963.

45. *Afro-American*, 5 October 1963.

46. *Time*, 11 October 1963, p. 30; *Saturday Evening Post*, 5 October 1963, pp. 78–80; *New Republic*, 17 November 1963, pp. 15–17; Anthony Lewis, *Portrait of a Decade*, pp. 100–3.

47. CNAC Study (1963).

48. *Daily Banner*, 11 November and 5 December 1963; *Afro-American*, 15 February 1964. One positive development during this period was the action of Baltimore Colt great Raymond Berry who, behind the scenes, made sure that the federal government lived up to its commitment to build public housing in the region (Raymond Berry to Stanley Wise, 14 March 1964, *CORE Papers*, reel 21).

49. Jones, *Wallace Story*, pp. 276–80; *Daily Banner*, 12 May 1964.

50. Sellers, *The River of No Return*, p. 71; *New York Times*, 13 and 15 May 1963.

51. *Daily Banner*, 27 and 28 May 1964.

52. *Ibid.*, 26 and 27 May and 5 June 1964; Minutes of Governor's Committee (Miles) Meeting (11 June 1964), Tawes Papers, MSA.

53. *Daily Banner*, 13 and 14 July 1964.

54. Even thirty years later, State Senator Malkus insisted that Cambridge had undeservedly received a bad reputation. He cited examples of racial progress before

the freedom riders arrived to support this view (author's interview with Frederick C. Malkus Jr.).

55. The views of Stewart Alsop, venerable columnist for the *Saturday Evening Post*, were representative. "A plague on both your houses," Alsop wrote. "Gloria Richardson can no more afford to be a moderate than Bob Fehsenfeld [owner of Dizzyland, who gained fame by cracking an egg on the head of a white civil rights protestor] can afford to serve Negroes in his cafe. . . . But it is quite clear where the competition in extremism among the black racists and the white racists is taking us. It is taking us to the point of no return, beyond which rational discussion and reasonable accommodation will no longer be possible" ("People in a Trap," *Saturday Evening Post*, 6 June 1964, p. 12).

56. In the early 1960s several magazines compared Cambridge to Salisbury, Maryland. The latter did not experience racial turmoil, these magazines argued, because of enlightened leadership, both black and white. Historians of the Eastern Shore of Maryland have repeated this analysis without qualification.

57. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Census of U.S. Population*, vol. 2, 1950 and 1960; memo to attorney general (18 June 1963), Burke Marshall Papers.

58. *Daily Banner*, 14 June 1963; Stewart Alsop, *Saturday Evening Post*, 6 June 1964, p. 12.

59. Charles B. Clark, *The Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia* (2 vols.; New York: Lewis Historical Press, 1950), 2:7-9; Kent, "Negro in Politics in Dorchester County, Maryland."

60. Following defeat of the public accommodations bill, a new consensus began to develop among whites in Cambridge. The traditional rivalry between the Winterbottom and Harrington factions disintegrated. The elites who had controlled politics during the period of the Phillips Packing Company's reign adapted to the election of Osvey Pritchett, a representative of the Harrington faction. At the same time, the Harrington faction showed its willingness to accept the participation of members of the Winterbottom group, as became evident with its acceptance of the election of Charles Cornish as head of the town council. This new consensus was more fragile than the old one and not as powerful. Nonetheless, it helps explain the return of stability to Cambridge in the 1970s.

61. *Packinghouse Worker*, December and May, 1964.

62. Schneider, "Summer of Fire."

63. Peter Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, second edition (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979), pp. 116-18, 141-42 and 152-53.

64. See: "Minutes (Notes) of (Miles) Governor Committee Meetings," Cambridge, 18 June 1964, Governor Tawes Papers, MSA, S1041-1557; Murray Kempton, "Gloria, Gloria," *New Republic*, 11 November 1963, pp. 15-17; Robert Liston, "Who Can We Surrender To?" *Saturday Evening Post*, 5 October 1963, pp. 78-80; William Hansen to Peter B. Levy.

Research Notes & Maryland Miscellany

Slavery in Worcester County, Maryland, 1688–1766

BARRY NEVILLE and EDWARD JONES

Americans, black and white, find the “peculiar institution” of slavery a fascinating topic. The mere mention of slavery conjures up images of gangs of black men and women toiling on great cotton plantations. Yet this image belongs to the nineteenth century and the Deep South. Earlier, in the Chesapeake, slavery had a quite different character—small farms, small slave holdings, and fairly modest masters.¹

The first federal census of 1790 revealed that 100,000 persons—one-third of the Maryland population—were slaves. In Worcester County on the lower Eastern Shore, of the 1,387 household heads listed, 668 (or roughly 48 percent) owned slaves. The number of slaves in that county comprised 33 percent of the population. This indeed is a striking statistic, and it raises a number of questions. Can we determine when the shift to dependence on slave labor occurred in Worcester County? Or had it, in fact, always been a dominating factor in the county’s economy? Other questions arise. How many slaves did Worcester planters own? What percentage of their estates was invested in slaves, and what was the cost of a slave as influenced by age, health, and gender? Through the analysis of nearly one thousand Worcester County inventories registered between 1688 and 1766 (subdivided into approximately twenty-year periods), it is possible to answer the questions listed above and to identify changing patterns of slaveholding in Worcester before the American Revolution.

Between 1660 and 1720, slavery emerged as an institution in colonial America.² By reviewing the number of slaves listed in Worcester County inventories during this formative period, one can assume that slavery was not the primary source of labor. Inventories and other documents mention a few indentured servants. Only twenty-seven of the 165 individuals leaving inventories during the period (about 16 percent) owned slaves. About one in ten Maryland planters owned slaves in 1670.

Messrs. Neville and Jones lecture in history at Salisbury State University.

TABLE 1
Number of Slaves per Estate by Period

| Number of Slaves | 1688-1720 | 1721-1740 | 1741-1766 |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 | 9 | 24 | 55 |
| 2 | 5 | 10 | 31 |
| 3 | 4 | 10 | 19 |
| 4-9 | 7 | 12 | 70 |
| 10+ | 1 | 5 | 35 |
| Total Estates | 26* | 61 | 210 |

*The actual number is 27, although one of the inventories listed male and female chattels without a specific number.

In Worcester County in 1720 only one slaveholder owned more than ten slaves. William Whittington owned eighteen of them and worked them on his five-thousand-acre estate located in Bogerternorton and Baltimore Hundreds. The rest of Worcester planters owned fewer slaves: eighty-six slaves resided in twenty-seven separate households. The average farm held three bondsmen or women; fifteen of the twenty-seven estates showed either one or two slaves.

Between 1721 and 1740 inventories showed an increase in the number of slaveowners as well as an increase in the number of slaves. There was also a substantial increase in the number of slaveholding estates. The largest slaveholder was Ebenezer Handy of Pocomoke Hundred, who owned fourteen slaves. This seems to suggest that estates held fewer slaves, but the opposite is true. Of 224 estates inventoried, sixty-one (27 percent of the decedents) owned slaves. The increase from the earlier period is significant, reflecting an 11 percent increase in the number of slaveowners. The number of estates with ten or more slaves also increased. Between 1688 and 1720 only one of the twenty-seven estates had ten or more slaves (4 percent). The number increased to 8 percent by 1740 (five of sixty-one). The inventories of those sixty-one estates listed 245 slaves, and the average number of slaves per estate was four, a considerable increase over the three per estate in the earlier period.

The increase in the average number of slaves per estate corresponds with the dependence on slave labor throughout Maryland, and we can view it as the death knell of indentured servitude. Planters found that while slaves were initially more expensive, the outlay would be recouped in the greater length of servitude—an indenture was legally binding only for seven years. Too, the supply of slaves began a long-term rise in the late seventeenth century at about the same time that pressures on whites to leave England as servants lessened. Expensive and difficult though it may have been to purchase a slave (whose maintenance cost approximated £5

sterling a year), the cost of free-white labor—at about £11 sterling per year throughout most of the eighteenth century—was even higher.³

Between 1741 and 1766, Worcester County courts inventoried 585 estates. Of these, 210, or about 36 percent, listed slaves as property. The number of estates holding slaves was substantially higher than earlier, despite the fact that the period witnessed a decline in tobacco production and a switch to the planting of cereal grains. Between 1688 and 1720, 4 percent of inventoried estates listed ten or more slaves; by 1740 this figure had increased to 8 percent.

Between 1741 and 1766 the average Worcester estate had five slaves. By 1766 thirty-two of the 585 estates inventoried (about 15 percent) possessed ten or more slaves. These figures show a dramatic growth in the number of large slaveholding estates. Whereas William Whittington had owned eighteen slaves and Ebenezer Handy fourteen, the largest slaveholder in the period between 1741 and 1766 was John Purnell of Bogerternorton and Matapony Hundreds, who owned thirty-four Africans. Estates were larger in size, crops more diversified, and planters now dependent upon slave labor for their economic well-being.

These figures were slightly lower than those for Maryland as a whole and much lower than those of the strongest tobacco-growing counties of colonial Maryland (in 1760, 46 percent of all Maryland residents owned one or more slaves).

Of the 1,387 households counted in the 1790 Worcester County census, 668 (about 48 percent) possessed one or more slaves. The number of people who owned ten or more slaves increased. Approximately 17 percent (115 of the 668 estates) of deceased Worcester citizens then owned ten or more bondsmen. The average slaveholding increased to six slaves. William Handy, the largest slaveholder listed in 1790, owned fifty-five. Note that the 1790 census figures reflected the living population, not inventories of those who had recently died. Though the census represents a different source of data, it did reflect the increase in slave ownership in Worcester County after the Revolution.

As slavery became the dominant source of labor in the colonial period, the purchase of a slave became one of the most expensive investments a planter made. Planters who could afford slaves expended a larger percentage of their wealth in the institution.

From 1688 to 1766 a total of 377 Worcester County estates went through probate inventory and were valued at less than £50. Of these, only eight (2 percent) were slaveholders. Between 1688 and 1720, ninety-nine of the 165 estates inventoried, or approximately 59 percent, had a value of less than £50. Only two in this category listed slaves as chattel property. In fact, of all the estates that listed a single slave in their inventory, the average estate wealth was £80. Research indicates that ownership of a single slave elevated the economic and social standing of the planter. Twenty-one percent of the inventoried population between 1688 and 1720 was valued in the range of £50–£99. A planter who owned an estate valued at £50 and more was in the upper 40 percent of the economic hierarchy. Of 134 families with estates valued at less than £100, only nine (7 percent) owned slaves. The upper 20

TABLE 2
Slave and Non-slaveholding Estates

| Estate value (£) | 1688-1720 | | 1721-1740 | | 1741-1766 | |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Slave | Non Slave | Slave | Non Slave | Slave | Non Slave |
| 0-50 | 2 | 97 | 3 | 91 | 3 | 181 |
| 51-99 | 7 | 28 | 12 | 45 | 24 | 101 |
| 100-199 | 8 | 10 | 18 | 24 | 50 | 71 |
| 200-299 | 3 | 1 | 13 | 1 | 38 | 10 |
| 300-399 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 21 | 4 |
| 400-499 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 13 | 2 |
| 500-599 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 16 | 2 |
| 600-699 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 1 |
| 700-799 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| 800-899 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 |
| 900-999 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| 1000+ | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 21 | 2 |
| Total | 27 | 138 | 61 | 163 | 210 | 375 |

percent of the population owned 93 percent of the slaves. Of the thirteen estates with wealth greater than £200, ten (77 percent) owned slaves.

In the period 1721-1740 the total value of estates with one slave increased from £80 to £124, placing this group in the upper third of inventoried society. As in the previous period, of those estates valued at less than £100 only fifteen of 151 (or 9.9 percent of the inventoried population) owned one slave. Those with estates of less than £100 constituted 67 percent of the inventoried population. Of the thirty-one estates valued at £200, twenty-nine, or 94 percent, were slaveholders. Planters owning estates valued at more than £200 constituted the upper 14 percent of wealth in this period.

Between 1741 and 1766 the estate wealth of those listing one slave again increased. By 1766 the estate value of those with one slave grew to £192. It remained a constant that planters with estates of less than £100 found slave ownership difficult; only twenty-nine of the 309 estates in this category (9.3 percent of the inventoried population) could afford slaves. Those estates of less than £100 constituted 53 percent of the inventoried population. In comparison, of the estates valued at more than £200, 133 of 155 (86 percent) were slaveholders. This group constituted the upper 26 percent of Worcester County society.

Up to this point the discussion has been fixed on ownership of slaves and the difficulty of the poorer planter acquiring a single slave. Did the increased ownership of slaves imply that total estate value grew as did the percentage of estate wealth

TABLE 3
Percentage of Total Estate Invested in Slavery for Average Estates by Period

| Date | Number of Slaves | Estate Wealth (£) | Investment in Slaves (£) | percent wealth in slaves |
|-----------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1688-1720 | 1 | 80 | 20 | 25.0 |
| | 2 | 136 | 35 | 25.7 |
| | 3 | 153 | 43 | 28.1 |
| | 4-9 | 618 | 135 | 21.8 |
| | 10+ | 1154 | 460 | 39.9 |
| 1721-1740 | 1 | 123 | 23 | 18.7 |
| | 2 | 139 | 39 | 28.1 |
| | 3 | 215 | 58 | 27.0 |
| | 4-9 | 362 | 128 | 35.4 |
| | 10+ | 706 | 279 | 39.5 |
| 1741-1766 | 1 | 192 | 35 | 18.3 |
| | 2 | 217 | 60 | 27.6 |
| | 3 | 299 | 83 | 27.8 |
| 1741-1752 | 4-9 | 398 | 162 | 40.7 |
| 1753-1766 | 4-9 | 399 | 175 | 43.9 |
| 1741-1752 | 10+ | 857 | 393 | 45.9 |
| 1753-1766 | 10+ | 1429 | 439 | 30.7 |

invested in slaves? Between 1688 and 1720 the percentage of estate wealth invested in one to three slaves remained constant at 25 percent to 28 percent of one's total wealth. The value of those estates increased from 80 to 153 pounds. Planters who held estates with four to nine slaves invested 22 percent of their wealth from an estate average of 618 pounds. William Whittington who owned eighteen chattels invested £460 of his estate worth £1,154 (or roughly 40 percent of his wealth) in black labor.

In the period between 1721 and 1740, an estate with one to three slaves expanded somewhat in its assessed wealth, yet slave expenditure decreased. While estate wealth then rose from 123 to 215 pounds, the percentage of wealth invested in slaves dropped from 27 to 19 percent. Planters holding four to nine slaves invested £128 of an estate valued at £362 or about 35 percent of their wealth. Finally, estates with ten or more slaves invested on average £279 of an estimated £706, or 39 percent of their estate wealth.

The greatest change in total estate wealth took place between 1741 and 1766. Planters owning one to three slaves saw their estate value increase from 192 to 299 pounds. The percentage of wealth invested in slaves nonetheless remained constant

(at 18 to 28 percent) in comparison with earlier periods. The average estate of four to nine slaves was valued at £398, with £161 or 41 percent of wealth invested in slaves. Between 1753 and 1766, after the change from a tobacco to grain economy in Worcester County, the wealth of estates with four to nine slaves remained constant at £399. The wealth invested in slaves increased to £175 or 44 percent of the estates' value. Those estates inventoried between 1741 and 1752 with ten or more slaves were valued at £856, with slave investment at £393, or about 46 percent of their wealth. From 1753 to 1766 investment in slaves rose from an average of 393 to 439 pounds. More significantly, the average estate between 1753 and 1766 increased to an estimated worth of £1,429. The percentage of slave investment decreased from 45 percent to 31 percent because of the overall increase in estate wealth.

The focus now changes to a discussion of the value of slaves during these three periods. How much did the slave cost, and how was the value of a slave affected by age, gender and health? The existing inventories from Worcester County estates in most cases listed the value of slaves, approximate ages, and gender. The executors of the estates tried to be as specific as possible in the listing of property to get a true estimate of the deceased's wealth.

In certain cases, however, details about the slave did not appear in the inventories; executors simply listed numbers of slaves, their sex, and an approximate value. In 1705 the estate of John Edgar listed "3 old negroes and 2 boys at £90.0.0."⁴ That of Benjamin Burton in 1728 included "2 boys at 3 and 1 cripple man at £1.0.0."⁵ In other cases the executors listed the names of the slaves or added a descriptive phrase such as "young and lusty male" or "young and lusty wench."⁶ It is not surprising to see the influence of the bible in the naming of slaves. The estate of George Layfield in 1703 listed:

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| Old Guy | £10.0.0 |
| Old Patience | £10.0.0 |
| Jack Fool | £20.0.0 |
| Black Will | £25.0.0 |
| Harry | £25.0.0 |
| Old Black Jack | £20.0.0 |
| Women Peg | £25.0.0 |

The inventory of Joseph Gray in 1726⁷ included:

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| Old Peter | £15.0.0 |
| Old Margret | £15.0.0 |
| Woman Tawnie | £25.0.0 |
| Man Abraham | £30.0.0 |
| Man Isaac | £28.0.0 |
| Man Marvelous | £24.0.0 |
| Man Samuel | £24.0.0 |
| Boy Jellico | £13.0.0 |

TABLE 4
Cost of Slaves by Age and Gender in £

| Gender and Age | 1688-1720 | 1721-1740 | 1741-1766 |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Male 16-60 | 27 | 30 | 42 |
| Female 16-60 | 22 | 24 | 36 |
| Male 12-15 | 13 | 19 | 27 |
| Female 12-15 | 10 | 13 | 29 |
| Male Under 12 | 12 | 12 | 19 |
| Female Under 12 | 10 | 14 | 19 |
| Old Males | 12 | 8 | 11 |
| Old Females | 13 | 8 | 12 |

| | |
|-----------------|---------|
| Boy John | £15.0.0 |
| Girl Hannah | £11.0.0 |
| Girl Nancy | £8.0.0 |
| Girl Laura | £8.0.0 |
| Woman Elizabeth | £32.0.0 |

Worcester County estate inventories from these years show a slight increase in the cost of a slave between 1688 and 1740. A much larger increase took place between 1741 and 1766. Looking at the period 1688-1720, the average male slave, aged sixteen to sixty, was valued at £27, with a common range of 20 to 30 pounds. The average cost of a female slave was £22 with a common range of 15 to 25 pounds. It is more difficult to appraise the value of other slaves because the data base remained small. For instance, there were only three male slaves twelve to fifteen years old mentioned in the inventories along with only three females of similar age. The value was £13 for the males and £10 for the females. There were four male children and one female child under twelve listed in the inventories. The males, on average, were valued at £12 and the female was listed at £10. Under the listings of old men, nine were mentioned at an average cost of £12. The four old women inventoried were valued at £13 each. The inventories were quite explicit in describing the physical condition of elder slaves. Both old men and women were described as "crippled," so infirm that they could no longer work; these slaves were valued at £1 or less. The elderly were taken care of until death.

Not surprisingly, the value of a slave increased from the late seventeenth to mid-eighteenth century. The average cost of a male slave rose from 27 to 30 pounds, an increase of 10 percent. The value of female slaves also increased slightly, from £22 in the first period to £24 by 1740, an increase of 8 percent. Male children aged twelve to fifteen increased in value from 13 to 19 pounds. This may be attributed

TABLE 5
Numbers of Slaves by Age and Gender

| Gender and Age | 1688-1720 | 1721-1740 | 1741-1766 |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Male 16-60 | 12 | 60 | 297 |
| Female 16-60 | 12 | 37 | 216 |
| Male 12-15 | 3 | 12 | 153 |
| Female 12-15 | 1 | 16 | 88 |
| Male Under 12 | 4 | 7 | 67 |
| Female Under 12 | 1 | 17 | 38 |
| Old Males | 9 | 9 | 38 |
| Old Females | 4 | 6 | 38 |
| Totals | 47* | 164* | 1055 |

* Many inventories only listed numbers of slaves with no description of gender or age

to a larger number of subjects in the inventories or possibly an increase in the value of their labor when slavery became more prevalent as indentured servitude dramatically declined. A female child of the same age increased in value from 10 to 13 pounds. Male children under twelve remained essentially the same at £12, but females increased in value from £10 to £14. The value of old men and old women decreased during the period 1721-1740. The old men decreased from 12 to 8 and old women from 13 to 7 pounds.

Between 1741 and 1766 the cost of a slave increased significantly. The average male grew in value from £30 during the period 1721-1740 to £42 by 1766, or 29 percent. The cost of a prime male field hand actually reached £55-60, especially from 1753 to 1766. Slave women increased in value from £23 to £36, (an increase of 36 percent). Several inventories listed the value of young females at as much as £50 for a healthy woman. Boys between twelve and fifteen increased in value from £19 to £27 and females twelve to fifteen increased from £13 to £29. Male slaves under twelve years of age increased in value from £12 to £19. The females increased from £13 to £19. The value of old men and old women also increased during this period. Old men rose in value from 8 to 11, and old women increased from 7 to 12 pounds. This is indicative of the increased value of any slave, regardless of age and gender during this period.

Slavery was the dominant source of labor in colonial Worcester County, increasing gradually during the period 1688-1740 and more rapidly from 1741-1766. The number of slaves increased, as did the planters' investment of capital in acquiring them. Despite declining tobacco prices, research demonstrates a dramatic growth in the value of estates and a corresponding rise in the value of individual slaves. Higher estate values had a direct correlation to the growth of slavery. Worcester

slaveholders spent more money to increase their slaveholdings, this growth of investment—as one would suspect—being greater among the larger and wealthier estates. As the cost of slaves increased, so did the percentage of a planter's estate invested in the institution. As also one might expect, the value of an African child increased with maturity, whether male or female, and decreased as one's labor output declined. In studying an agricultural economy requiring hard work, we should not be surprised to learn that male slaves were worth more than females. The difference however, was not terribly pronounced; men and women did the same type of work in the fields.

NOTES

1. This essay summarizes research in the Worcester County probate inventories from the period 1688–1766, liber J. W., no. 15, Maryland State Archives, Annapolis. The authors used microfilm of these records at the Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture at Salisbury State University. There has been a great deal of research done on Somerset County, but little on slavery in Worcester County, originally part of Somerset. Worcester became a separate political entity in 1742.

2. Edwin J. Perkins, *The Economy of Colonial America* (New York: Columbia University Press 1988), pp. 239–40. For background on the shift from white servitude to black slavery in the region see Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1976).

3. See John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1985), and Alan Kulikoff, "The Tobacco Industry in the Chesapeake Colonies 1617–1730," *Research in Economic History*, 5 (1980): pp. 123–42, demonstrate variable dependence on tobacco in Maryland counties.

4. Worcester County Inventories, 1688–1766, liber J. W., no. 15 pp. 27–28.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 35–40. For the Layfield inventory, see same, pp. 35–40.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 118–20.

Rumors of Rebellion: Fear of a Slave Uprising in Post-Nat Turner Baltimore

SARAH KATZ

On 21 August 1831, in Southampton County, Virginia, Nat Turner and six of his fellow slaves set out to win their own freedom and encourage other slaves to join in bloody insurrection against white rule. Turner and his band killed some sixty whites before they themselves were captured.

Their “revolution” failed, but it did excite a revolution of fear that spread far beyond Southampton County and the great Dismal Swamp of Virginia, where Turner had fled. Rumors of revolt echoed across the slave South, as white Southerners read every gesture or look of black defiance as part of an unfolding slave conspiracy. Slaveholders clamped down hard on bondspeople, tightened slave codes and patrols, and cast a wary eye on outsiders who might agitate slaves. Such fears extended even to urban areas—perhaps because there the slaves seemed beyond control, hiring their own time and living apart from masters.¹ Even more ominous was the large free black population, which seemed to represent an incitement to rebellion to whites. In North and South Carolina, Delaware, and Maryland reports of slave conspiracies followed the Nat Turner uprising. Even Baltimore, with no history of slave rebellion, became the scene of rumored revolt. While no hard evidence suggests the hatching of a conspiracy in the city, fears of Turner-inspired revolt preyed heavily on the minds of whites, fueled by inflated and unfounded reports from nearby states.

When first reports of the insurrection reached Baltimore, they came in second-hand and exaggerated form. In August, *Niles' Weekly Register*, considered by many to be one of the best papers of the day, stated that “the insurgents are believed to have 100 to 150 mounted men,” when in fact Turner originally began with a band of seven. Other reports stated that as many as six hundred to eight hundred rebels had forced the militia to retreat.² The *Baltimore American and Daily Commercial Advertiser* said the insurgent force was headed by “one or two white men,” although it later insisted that the revolt was “little more than the eruption of 150 to 200 slaves.” Through the end of August and the months thereafter, conflicting reports abounded. In September, whites in North Carolina discovered a slave conspiracy they believed was related to Turner’s revolt. Baltimore newspapers cited the

An independent researcher, Ms. Katz studies at Columbia University.

Richmond *Whig* as the source of the story. *Niles' Weekly Register* described two to three thousand blacks in the Dismal Swamp, preparing to march upon New Bern ("Newburn"), North Carolina. The city papers then reported Wilmington, North Carolina, to be "in the hands of the blacks and burned." Accounts said to be "not confirmed" or having "no foundation" presented scenes of terror from North Carolina and Delaware amid descriptions of martial law, armed citizens, and fleeing women. The Wilmington, Delaware, *Journal* stated that the conspiracies were only rumors but then published an unsigned letter declaring that, "For a week past, scarcely a night has passed but what our citizens have been alarmed at midnight with reports that the negroes had assembled in large numbers at different places."

Reports in well respected papers like *Niles' Weekly Register* and the Baltimore *American* lent credibility to such rumors, thereby adding to the hysteria. Although the papers contradicted themselves with each issue, they reflected the frenzied fear among whites that the nation's slaves were prepared to rise up in a violent bid for freedom. As the documents below suggest, alarming reports from nearby states fueled fear among Baltimoreans, who demanded that the mayor keep black plots from erupting.

On 21 September 1831, one Ben Thomas in Fells Point received a letter concerning an alleged slave conspiracy in Baltimore. This curious letter eventually found its way into the mayor's correspondence file in the Baltimore City archives, where one usually finds much duller material. We can only roughly sketch Thomas's identity. A search of *Matchett's Baltimore City Directory*, Baltimore city tax records for 1830 and 1831, and the 1830 federal census records suggests that he was a free African American, aged twenty-four to thirty-six, who worked as a laborer in this period and lived in "Strawberry al. N. of Gough." He was probably poor; the tax records for 1830 and 1831 do not indicate that he paid taxes. His background and influence in the black community are unknown. It is not even certain that he is the same Ben Thomas to whom Ezekiah (or Ezekiel) Butler revealed a plan to "help murder the damd white people."³

The plan Butler described seems somewhat illogical. As Butler related it, Nat Turner, Ben Tyler, and Sandy Ellon were supposed to come from Philadelphia to prepare for the "overthrow of the whites." The identities of Ben Tyler and Sandy Ellon remain elusive. No such persons are listed in either the Pennsylvania or Maryland federal census records or in likely local sources. They were presented to Thomas by Butler in a way, however, that suggests they were readily recognizable in Butler's circle.

At the time the letter was written, Turner was still at large and hiding in a cave (he would not be captured until October, 1831). He already had acquired almost supernatural power in the popular imagination. In eluding white captors, he lent credence to the belief that he could inspire further slave revolts.⁴ Later, in his purported "confessions" to Thomas Gray (the document is a subject of scholarly dispute), he insisted that he held no prior knowledge of the seemingly related conspiracies in North Carolina or elsewhere.⁵ Most likely, he was not involved in

later incidents, but Turner could not control the rumors of his imminent rising elsewhere.⁶

Ben Thomas
Point
Baltimore

Baltimore September 21 1831

Ben Tyler Nat Turner Sandy Ellon and several other men intending to come on from Philadelphia on the morrow to get the men you have in muster ready for our valiant deed and act and which will end in the overthrow of the whites and our freedom so i want you and Cousin Ned and those other gentlement who are going to help us as soon as you hear the signal which is known to all of our colour to rise and murder our masters but in gods name do not hurt Quakers but butcher all others, men woman and children. Quakers we can make work for us when we get possession of the country. So I want you and your friends to distribute yourselves about in the houses where some female colour people live and at 1 oclok on monday night go to the work forge. I remain your affectionate friend and well wisher

Ezekiah Butler

brother John told me that there was eight hundred people in town that were going to help murder the damd white people

I send you this together with several other letters that I received from our friends in North which go to show that they are nearly ready to arise there, although the constables have taken our guns away yet by God we can do our busines with the knife and monday will be free

E. Butler

Jim told me to tell you that he had been going and all seem prepared to rise. I think we can muster fifteen hundred—as soon you read this and show it to your men burn it up for if the damd white scoundrel come get it they would hang us all

Exaggerated reports of slave revolt alarmed Baltimore in 1831; so did a fear of abolition societies. Many supporters of slavery thought the antislavery movement encouraged insurrection. Abolitionist Benjamin Lundy's *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, published in Baltimore, expressed its distress at the violence in Virginia but conceded that it achieved the ultimate goals of abolition. "Do the fierce tempests of passion, aided by physical violence, or the sober appeals of reasonable argument and moral persuasion, tend most to humanize the savage heart of man?" wrote Lundy in August, 1831. He was pleased that such an incident had focused public attention on slavery throughout the nation.⁷ The Maryland Anti-Slavery Society, of which Lundy was a prominent member, apparently shared Turner's goal of slave emancipation but did not agree on the methods. Antislavery activists sought a

peaceful means of freeing slaves and allowing them to be independent. The insurrection seemed to hold out for slaves the promise of independence—by means anything but peaceful.

Widespread fear of abolitionism engendered baseless accusations. In August, 1831, the *Genius* had printed an article warning that the nation stood on the brink of an insurrection. A postscript in the same issue reported the outbreak of such an insurrection in Southampton. Whether or not this piece was purposefully printed in this way, the juxtaposition of antislavery warning and a report of a real slave insurrection made Lundy and his fellow abolitionists seem unduly and suspiciously knowledgeable about the rebellion. Similarly, Baltimore newspapers blamed William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator* for inciting rebellion throughout the South. *Niles' Weekly Register* condemned Garrison's paper, arguing that it "increas[ed] the difficulties that stand in the way of rendering efficient service to people of color, bond or free. It is a great misfortune, that persons so impotent to do good may have a mighty power to do evil." Some Baltimoreans went so far as to accuse abolitionist societies of holding midnight military drills to prepare blacks for insurrection. Although no evidence suggests any such preparations ever took place, the notion owed something to reports in Baltimore newspapers, notably the *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*.⁸

Fear of abolitionist societies appears in the mayor's correspondence as well. Another letter in the mayor's file was addressed to the editors of the *Commercial Chronicle and Daily Marylander*. Sent to the mayor anonymously, it was received 26 September 1831. No copy of the *Commercial Chronicle and Daily Marylander* for that or proximate dates survives, but it is unlikely that the letter was published. Printing it might have directed anger at the paper itself for fanning racial unrest at a time when the flames seemed to be cooling. *Niles' Weekly Register* assured its readers that "[a]nother affair like that at Southampton" could not recur: "[t]he power is with the whites and that they will abuse it, under such circumstances, must be expected." Despite these assurances, someone thought the letter important enough to send to the mayor.⁹

For the Mayor

(The Editors of the Commer Chronicle & D Marylander

Messrs Editors

You wil confer favour on a Subscriber by giving this an insertion in your mornings paper—to wit—that a number of Blacks have been in the Habit for several nights past of Assembling in Military Uniform towards the west of Saratoga street, a number of them was seen last night about Midnight with their Captain at their head giving orders and putting them through their Military exercise—Citizens of Baltimore be on your guard—for this is a fact

—please excuse me in not mentioning my name—

We have deemed it proper to send this communication to the mayor L & B

Nat Turner's insurrection excited an increased fear of free blacks and educated blacks (slaves and free alike) in general. Nat Turner was literate. Deeply religious, he was prompted towards his actions by what he believed to be a sign from God. Although the "sign" was probably an irregular solar eclipse, Turner's belief in religion, as well as the leadership he exercised in the rebellion, resulted in his acceptance as a preacher.¹⁰ Since Turner had been able to conceal his intelligence and his religious zeal from his master, Baltimoreans likely feared that others like him existed and so might have sought to eliminate this problem. Colonization societies saw the "removal" of blacks to Africa as a means to solve the problem of slavery. The Maryland State Colonization Society cited the rising numbers in the free black population between the 1820 and 1830 state censuses stating: "The evil of an increasing black population is pressing upon us, and the longer that we delay to adopt measures to check it, the greater does the task become."¹¹ The Turner insurrection directly resulted in support for such emigration because many whites believed that free blacks were stirring up the slaves. Maryland's black codes also were tightened.

The third letter was written by John Karter, addressed to a Colonel Small, and dated 18 November 1831. Colonel Small likely was Jacob Small, known as "Colonel" since his militia days and the mayor of Baltimore until March, 1831, when he resigned and William Stewart took his place. Although the letter is among the mayor's correspondence, it is addressed to the wrong mayor. John Karter, the letter's putative author, is not so easily identified. No John Karters appear in the census and local records, but five John Carters lived in the Baltimore area in 1830. None of them were black. Karter claimed he was a preacher and most likely was black, though why he would divulge the outlines of a slave revolt to Small seems a mystery. Perhaps such a letter survived in the mayor's correspondence because the possibility of another black preacher involved in a revolt terrified the city, and the mayor's office wanted to keep a record of Karter's warnings and activities.¹²

Coln Small

i liv abot 14 mile from baltimore and hav herd the culerd peple intend risin here on saterdy next to go to baltimor. i was out preching on sundy whin 234 jind them i have gred to go wid them but hop this notis will sav me as i will strive to stop dem when we gets to the city whin yu will mimbr i told yu 1st as i am a preacher among them and my wif and childrn will be saf on saterdy nignt at 12 klok attak will be mad be rady and the Lord preserve you all or not despite this note

John Karter

Although the identities and motivations of the authors remain mysteries, these three letters give clearer insight into the minds of Baltimoreans in the wake of the Turner uprising. Rumors of insurrection played on existing apprehensions about the institution of slavery itself. These letters attest to the variety and volatility of rumors and suggest something about the “common folks” concerns and credulity in the emotionally charged fall of 1831. They also reflect the uncertainty Baltimoreans felt about what to do about slavery in their midst. Many were wary of abolitionists, especially as abolitionism became equated with calls for servile insurrection.

While Nat Turner never set foot in the city of Baltimore, his memory haunted the city after the bloody days of August—as it did wherever slavery survived.

NOTES

1. Richard C. Wade, *Slavery in the Cities: The South, 1820–1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970). The author gratefully acknowledges and thanks Professor Randall Miller, Saint Joseph’s University.

2. *Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 26 August 1831.

3. According to the federal census, there were two Ezekiel Butlers living in Worcester County, Maryland, in 1830. They probably were father and son. One was a between sixty and seventy years old, the other twenty to thirty.

4. The *Baltimore Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 21 September 1831, placed blame for the alleged events in Wilmington, North Carolina, on “General Nat.”

5. Thomas Gray wrote, “When I questioned him as to the insurrection in North Carolina happening about the same time, he denied any knowledge of it.” (Henry Irving Tragle, *The Southampton Slave Revolt* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1971), p. 316.

6. Letter 463, Mayor’s Correspondence, Bureau of Archives, Baltimore City Hall.

7. Lundy’s *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, 2 (no. 4, August 1831), declared, “Vengeance is accumulating in the land of despotism, and it will assuredly burst forth with tremendous fury if justice be not admitted to a participation in the councils of those in authority.”

8. On 17 October 1831, the *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser* published an excerpt from a letter in the Wilmington, Delaware, *Journal* stating: “For a week past scarcely a night has passed but what our citizens have been alarmed at midnight with reports that the negroes had assembled in large numbers at different places.”

9. Letter 464, Mayor’s Correspondence, Bureau of Archives, Baltimore City Hall.

10. *Niles’ Weekly Register* and the *Gazette and Daily Advertiser* first referred to Turner as a preacher. The *Gazette* later corrected itself: He was “one of those fanatical scoundrels.”

11. Quoted in To the People of Maryland from the Maryland State Colonization Society, *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 27 August 1831.

12. Letter 462, Mayor’s Correspondence, Bureau of Archives, Baltimore City Hall.

Serena Johnson and Slave Domestic Servants in Antebellum Baltimore

FRANK TOWERS

Baltimore had America's largest African-American urban population before 1860, and it was home to one of the nation's most vibrant free black communities. In 1860 slaves made up only 8 percent of Baltimore's 27,898 African-Americans and played a negligible part in the city's economy. Cheaper wage labor, fueled by European immigration in the 1840s and 1850s, undermined slavery's profitability in Baltimore. Most of the slaves that remained in the city worked as personal servants to well-off white families. The importance of African-American domestic labor to the city's wealthy white families influenced black residence patterns and gender ratios. White households employed 4,515 African-American live-in domestic servants in 1860. These domestics, over 75 percent of whom were women, constituted 18 percent of the city's black population. Most Baltimore slaves worked as household servants, and female slaves outnumbered male slaves by three to one in 1850. Among the free African-American population this imbalance was less extreme at fifty-six women out of every one hundred free blacks. Scholars have tied these sex ratios to the importance of domestic labor for Baltimore's slave economy. Traditional male slave occupations had been replaced by free labor by 1850.¹

As with other social arrangements confronting Baltimore's blacks, domestic service offered some opportunities. In the late 1830s Anna Douglass, the wife of one the city's most famous antebellum residents, Frederick Douglass, saved money from her wages as a free domestic laborer to put toward the planned purchase of her husband's freedom. But for most black domestic servants, constant supervision from white employers with whom they lived severely limited not only their freedom of movement but even the ability to associate with other African-Americans. In this respect, the lives of Baltimore's domestics, particularly slaves that lived with their employers, shared the same restrictions felt by house servants in the rural South.²

The case of Serena Johnson, a slave who worked as a live-in domestic servant for wealthy commission merchant Henry Rieman and his family in late antebellum Baltimore, illustrates the pressures on domestic slaves as well as the unique opportunities of city life and the social dynamic of white authority over urban slaves. While

Dr. Towers teaches history at Clarion University of Pennsylvania. He contributed "Race, Power, and Money in Antebellum Baltimore: Mary Ridgely's Thousand-Dollar Note" to the fall 1993 issue of *Maryland Historical Magazine*.

journeying from Baltimore to visit his aunt in Pennsylvania in 1829, Henry Riemman bought six-year-old Serena Johnson from her Frederick County master and separated her from her family. Sophia Steuart, Riemman's daughter, claimed that Johnson's mother, "was a veritable 'old woman living in a shoe'—having really so many children that she did not know what to do." In Steuart's benign account of breaking up Johnson's family she recalled that her parents "proposed to relieve [Johnson's mother] of one [child], and Jack Parsnips the father as well making no objection, little Serena . . . was duly transferred." The Riemans presented Johnson's departure as beneficial to her parents, who were beset by too many children. More likely the sale of Serena Johnson profited her owner and fit the household demands of the Riemans, who had four young daughters and foresaw a need for household labor for years to come. Only hinting at the misery that a six-year-old must have felt at losing her parents, Steuart asserted that after "a few days [Johnson] was quite at home" at the Riemman's Baltimore residence.³

Johnson grew up in the Riemman household and by her owners' account had a pleasant childhood in which she enjoyed roughly equal treatment with the four Riemman daughters, all near her in age. The Riemans demanded a heavy workload from Johnson, who was expected to manage the entire household. Johnson's burdens increased in the 1840s when the Riemman daughters married and had children, all of whom lived in Henry's home. The Riemans remembered Johnson for her cooking skills, but they likely asked more than kitchen duties from her. Elizabeth Riemman, Henry's granddaughter, recalled that, "grandmother gave very little supervision to the house," and that most of the responsibility rested with Johnson.⁴

The Riemans' glowing accounts of Johnson's life expressed both love and condescension toward her. These combined sentiments informed Henry Riemman's bequest in his will that Johnson be given her freedom on her thirty-fifth birthday on 1 December 1858, or at the time of his death. As much as it signified concern over the fate of servants, manumission could serve the economic self-interest of an employer seeking to dispense with redundant labor. Yet Riemman also gave Johnson fifty dollars for sickness or emergency and ordered that Johnson receive an additional five dollars per month for the rest of her life. While these provisions demonstrated the Riemans' affection and concern they also fell short of more direct guarantees of happiness and success such as immediate freedom or a stipend large enough to facilitate moving from Baltimore or setting up a business.⁵

The accounts that Johnson's white owners provided of her life revealed how racial images shaped their views and treatment of a powerless slave servant. Steuart claimed that Johnson possessed a, "masterful, resourceful, nature" with which she made the Riemman girls "her obedient servants." Steuart, who married into Baltimore's white upper class, viewed Johnson in loving yet stereotypical terms. In keeping with characterizations attributed to African Americans by white editorialists in the 1850s, Steuart also described Johnson as "an unconscionable little monkey," who stole sweets, broke valuable combs, and proved adept at "appropriating" the

toys of her white playmates. Steuart similarly wrote of Johnson's 1843 conversion to Catholicism.

. . . somehow [Johnson's] mind turned to the Roman Catholic church—the grandure of the ceremonials appealing to her poetic nature. She had often told me when she saw the priest in gorgeous robes, little boys waiving incense, burning candles, and heard the organ pealing out music, she thought she must be in heaven. As she would never learn to read, upon me devolved the task of teaching her the catechism and preparing her to make her first communion.

For a white Protestant in Know-Nothing Baltimore, emotionalism, gimmickry, and simplicity appeared as common denominators between Catholics and African-Americans. Testifying to Steuart's Protestant chauvinism, she stated that, "in after years when the glamour had passed away, and her spirit yearned for something more satisfying she left the Roman Catholic church and joined the P[rotestant] E[piscopal] church in which she died." In addition to this depiction of Johnson's faith as misguided, Steuart attributed another white image of blacks, promiscuity, to her servant who she claimed had "the most inordinate desire for conquests."⁶

Coupled with these characterizations of Johnson as mischievous, childish, and libidinal, Steuart also imbued her memory of Johnson with the slave-owners' ideal of a dutiful and "self-denying" servant. Johnson's labors for the family included preparing special oyster feasts for the Rieman children after their parents had gone to sleep. Johnson's preparation of "special dainties" for the children when Henry Rieman went away to work remained a happy childhood memory of Rieman's granddaughter Elizabeth. As a tribute to her servant, Elizabeth Rieman remembered that Johnson "loved all the children, was beloved by all, respected and trusted by her master and mistress, and all of their large family; was included in all rejoicing; and in all sorrow and trouble."⁷

For her part, Johnson seems to have reciprocated the love shown by the Riemans yet opted for her own independence when circumstances permitted. Johnson stayed with the Rieman family after emancipation and cared for Henry Rieman. Following his death, Johnson left Baltimore even though, "after [Rieman's] death there were seven homes open to her" in the city. Johnson spent her later years working as a nurse in Philadelphia. Yet in her old age she returned to Baltimore where she died. In 1870, Johnson gave up her claim to Rieman's five-dollar monthly stipend. This act might have reflected a desire to be free from dependence on the Rieman family, or a concern for the financial well-being of her former master's estate. Upon her death in 1880 Johnson bequeathed her life savings of \$136.91 to Rieman's daughters. Obviously not in need of the money, Sophia Steuart spent the savings on a silver butter dish. As an act of fidelity to the Rieman family, Johnson asked that she be buried at the foot of Henry Rieman's grave in Green Mount Cemetery in Baltimore. Her tombstone read, "Faithful servant of Henry Rieman."

NOTES

1. Joseph Garonzik, "Urbanization and the Black Population of Baltimore, 1850-1870" (doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1974), pp. 144, 148. This figure for black domestics had increased slightly from 15 percent of the total black population in 1850. Barbara Jeanne Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 47, supports Garonzik's conclusions about the predominance of domestic servitude as a Baltimore slave occupation.

2. William S. McFeely, *Frederick Douglass* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991), pp. 68-69. For this view of the restrictions that came with domestic service see M. Ray Della, Jr., "The Problems of Negro Labor in the 1850's," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 66 (1971): 14-32, 17.

3. R. J. Matchett, *Matchett's Baltimore Director, for 1855-'56* (Baltimore: R. J. Matchett, 1856), p. 283; Mary Elizabeth Steuart, "Serena Johnson," Serena Johnson Papers, Special Collections, Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society; Bill of Sale of Serena Johnson to Henry Rieman, 2 October 1829, Serena Johnson Papers.

4. Elizabeth Rieman, "Notes Taken from the Description of the Household of Henry Rieman," Serena Johnson Papers, MdHS.

5. Will of Henry Rieman, Serena Johnson Papers, MdHS.

6. Steuart, "Serena Johnson," Serena Johnson Papers, MdHS.

7. Elizabeth Rieman, "Notes Taken from the Description of the Household of Henry Rieman," Serena Johnson Papers, MdHS.

8. Ibid.; Serena Johnson's Account and Steuart, "Serena Johnson," Serena Johnson Papers, MdHS.

Democracy's Incursion into the Eastern Shore: The 1870 Election in Chestertown

C. CHRISTOPHER BROWN

The ratification in 1870 of the Fifteenth Amendment, which extended the franchise to all citizens regardless of race, opened the door for the entrance of black men into the political arena in Maryland. Beginning in the spring, Republicans worked diligently throughout the Eastern Shore of Maryland to promote festive celebrations of the Fifteenth Amendment. With uncanny efficiency, the party of Lincoln also turned its attention toward registering the newly eligible voters. Attracting blacks as voters, although not as political office holders, was to become the core of the Republicans' hope to turn the political tide in Maryland.

Blacks and whites who were suddenly working together to extend a newly enacted right to Maryland's disenfranchised minority did so, no doubt, in a revolutionary spirit. A fundamental step toward a truer democracy was at hand. Although, to be sure, women were given no place in the American political system, for the first time since the turn of the nineteenth century black men were returning to the political process, and this time in significant numbers. Not only did this fulfill a long-held ideological dream, it also had profound implications concerning the distribution of fundamental political power. A new day had dawned and the black and white Republicans of Maryland were positioned to reap its advantages.

By late January, 1870 in Chestertown, then the Shore's most prosperous town, Democratic party members were coming to accept the inevitable. Although Maryland had refused to ratify the Fifteenth Amendment, three-quarters of the states finally had consented to this expansion of the franchise to the border states, and soon thereafter the constitutional enactment would officially be proclaimed.¹ The Chestertown *Transcript's* comment on the new constitutional mandate was blunt: the "so-called amendment . . . had been forcibly and illegally obtained." Nevertheless, it urged its readers, Maryland must swallow hard and accept this measure, or else a far worse fate lay ahead: major federal interference "in the domestic affairs of our State."²

To the *Transcript*, the scheme of the Radicals was, indeed, to bait the Democrats into such protest that Congress would intervene. Feeling that the state was already living under a "semi-military [federal] government," it sighed in relief when the

Professor Brown teaches at the University of Maryland School of Law and is a partner in the Baltimore firm Brown, Goldstein & Levy. He is compiling a history of black citizens' political involvement on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Democratic State Committee voted not to oppose enforcement of the Amendment. When the Democratically controlled General Assembly followed suit, wise counsel prevailed and "the danger of armed Federal intervention had been averted."³

Democrats then turned their attention to how they should deal with the presently enfranchised. The *Transcript* initially reacted to this new political arrangement by urging that the black vote be courted. No blame should be laid at the black man's door for the new federal command. Only the Republicans should be castigated. It predicted that the black citizens would exert their independence and "feel perfectly free to act for the best interests of their race," which, it suggested, could be for Democratic as well as Republican candidates.⁴

On 31 March 1870 the official news came to Maryland: President Ulysses S. Grant announced the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. Hereafter, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by . . . any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." On Saturday afternoon, two days later, Governor Oden Bowie sent a veto message to the General Assembly refusing to sign a bill that incorporated the town of Chestertown and limited its franchise to white men. Anxious to keep federal election supervisors at bay, the Governor pointed to the Fifteenth Amendment as compelling his action. The clear import of federal command had thus been sounded in the State.⁵

The passage of two more days brought the first election in Maryland to take place under this more democratic regime. On the Western Shore, on that early morning of 4 April, William Taylor appears to have become the first black person to vote in Maryland since the early years of the century. Taylor and twenty-six of his black colleagues cast their ballots at a peaceful and otherwise uneventful election for the commissioners of newly incorporated Towsontown, in Baltimore County.⁶ This pattern repeated itself in the next few weeks in other Western Shore locales such as Hagerstown, Upper Marlboro, Laurel, and Westminster.⁷

On that same day on the Eastern Shore, however, would-be black voters experienced a contrary result. At Salisbury's town election, local election officials thwarted the attempts of several black men to vote. Lack of appropriate registration was given as the reason for these actions. Because blacks had not been entitled to vote before, no preparations had been made in Salisbury to permit their registration. The Salisbury election registrars, unlike those in Towsontown, failed to accommodate this understandable omission. A small group of pioneers of post-Civil War voting thus once again met successful resistance to changes in the Shore's way of life.⁸

The voting results in Towsontown, however, indicated that the newly enfranchised would be siding with the Republican cause; they had helped propel the full Republican slate into office. Sensing the futility of Democrats seeking out the black vote, the *Transcript* righted its course and adopted the advice of the *Statesman*:

We are no advocate for masterly inactivity now, but on the contrary, for the most active and zealous campaign, not to divide the negro vote, but to bring

out the entire white vote, and show by overwhelming majorities at the next election, that we do not mean to give up the State to the Radicals⁹

With this quick turnaround, the Democrats became the "White Man's Party."

The Towsontown/Salisbury divergence reoccurred in later local elections that spring. On 5 April, the day after the Salisbury election, St. Michael's hosted the Shore's second election under the Fifteenth Amendment. Despite comprising one-quarter of the town's population, blacks were fully shut out of the process. The *Easton Star* happily reported that the "election was untrammelled by the fifteenth amendment—no negroes offered to vote."¹⁰

The 2,110 persons residing in Easton in 1870 made it the biggest town on the Shore. It also had a sizeable black constituency, 43.2 percent. Easton's local election was held on 2 May, well after word had reached the Shore of the new Amendment's arrival. Nevertheless, no black is reported to have voted in this Talbot County election. In language that signaled a determined battle for continued white domination, the *Easton Star* gloated that "Africa did not make his appearance on the field of action."¹¹

Not until 23 May 1870 did some blacks within the traditional confines of the Eastern Shore finally exercise their rights under the Fifteenth Amendment. The historic Chestertown commissioner election not only witnessed the Shore's first black voters, but these voters came to the polls in such numbers that they dictated the election result. The political power of the newly enfranchised stormed in like a lion.

The setting for this historic event was the Shore's wealthiest town, comprised of slightly under two thousand residents. Situated on the stately shore of the Chester River, Chestertown made a profound initial impression. As one Northern visitor described it in 1871:

The broad, main street of Chestertown suggests the entrance to some ancient capital. Its venerable mansions, many of them in excellent preservation—its bank, court-house, hotel, and churches—would be disappointing if the corn fields succeeded them on the other side; but, instead, there is the broad expanse of Chester River, bordered by gardens and stately homes. . . . I could have believed myself in England, there was such an air of antique comfort and order about the place.¹²

Chestertown's black community in 1870 totalled 808 persons, over 43 percent of the town's population. The great majority worked in a status not too different than that before the war; they were primarily unskilled farm hands and domestic servants. The more affluent served as carters, barbers, sailors, and farmers. James Jones, the town's elder activist, was its prominent black grocer and landowner. His \$4,000 in real property consisted primarily of several homes he rented to other black residents. The town's second wealthiest black citizen was Perry Chambers, like Jones in his late sixties, who farmed and was assessed as owning \$6,800 in property. In contrast to

Jones, who for decades had been a community leader in the black man's quest for freedom, Chambers was a moderate, more trusted by the white community.¹³

Chestertown's William Perkins, this era's most prominent black man on the Shore, stood as the unquestioned leader of Kent County African Americans. The owner of the Rising Sun Saloon on Bridge Street, Perkins's net worth was \$10,000, making him one of the Shore's wealthiest blacks. For twenty years he had been an outspoken leader of black causes. In the next few years he would become the first black Maryland delegate to a national Republican convention and the shore's first black federal grand juror.¹⁴

Despite this scattering of "middle class" leaders, the black community posed no economic match for the dominant white hierarchy. To the white men fell the positions of community power: they owned the area's most successful farms, served as the town's predominant landlords, and enjoyed the cash flow of the downtown stores. They were the lawyers, bankers, public office holders, and inheritors of wealth. George Wescott, a stalwart Republican, was by far the richest man in Kent County with \$315,000 in real and personal assets. He alone was worth more than all the black residents of the county combined. Wescott controlled much of the activities in the county from his position as president the First National Bank and ownership of over 3,400 acres of farmland, far more than anyone else in Kent.

A list of Chestertown's ten wealthiest white residents also included two lawyers, two merchants, a widow, a judge and a chemist. Their combined wealth tallied \$1,362,800. The combined assets of the ten wealthiest black residents totalled only \$32,960. In a community where the ten wealthiest whites averaged over \$130,000 in assets, with the comparable blacks averaging just \$3,300, a near forty-fold difference, little doubt could be had as to where the economic leverage resided.¹⁵

Many of these wealthier white citizens were Republicans. In the six weeks after Governor Bowie struck the "whites only" qualification from the Chestertown code, black leaders and these white Republicans addressed the task of organizing this new assembly of voters. Their efforts paid off with near perfect results. They developed in the black community a remarkable sense of patriotism and citizenship: nearly each eligible black voter came to the polls.

This success did not come about without planning. In mid-April a large gathering assembled in the town's main black church, Janes United Methodist, to rally black residents around the Republican cause. The main speaker was the white Baltimore Republican, Hugh Lennox Bond, who soon would sit on the United States Court of Appeals. Bond, working with William Perkins, was a major factor in raising the funds for most of the Shore's schools for blacks. He also had distinguished himself in his unsuccessful bid for the governorship in 1867 by preaching the cause of black progress to an electorate in which blacks could not yet vote. His remarks at Janes focused on his favorite theme: the need for the formerly enslaved class to attain the education necessary to future success in the white-dominated society. Gen. R. Clay Crawford also spoke at this Republican rally.¹⁶

Less than a week before the election, three thousand black residents from all over Kent County converged on their county seat in celebration of the Fifteenth Amend-

ment. Dressed in their finest attire, men, women, and children began assembling throughout Chestertown as early as 8:00 A.M. As by now could be expected, William Perkins was at the forefront as the event's organizer. He was aided by his long-time companions, James A. Jones, Richard S. Jones, Levi Rodgers, and James Sprigg. Their unstinting efforts produced a model of efficient, political organization.¹⁷

Even the normally hostile Chestertown *Transcript* offered a positive, festive picture of the distinctive event:

The military, societies, wagons, carriages and horsemen, with banners spread to the breeze, flags flying, and enlivened by the music of drums and fifes and two excellent colored brass bands, paraded the principal streets about noon.

Upon full assembly all paraded to a grove south of town near Baker's schoolhouse. At two in the afternoon the speakers began. Most prominent among them were General Crawford and the Reverend Henry Highland Garnet.

Garnet, a former Kent County slave who escaped north and became a nationally recognized abolitionist orator, had returned home for this event. The slave trade had brought his grandfather, a Mandingo chieftain in West Africa, to Maryland. Garnet was born of slave parents in 1815 in New Market, Kent County. After leaving the Shore, he became a prolific writer and speaker for a broad array of issues including slave rebellion, temperance, land reform, women's rights, enfranchisement, and colonization. Although the latter stance raised eyebrows among his abolitionist colleagues, he declared that he "would rather see a man free in Liberia than a slave in the United States." The first black man to deliver a sermon to Congress, Garnet was later the United States Minister to Liberia, where he died in 1882.¹⁸

Soon after the end of the war, Crawford, a Tennessee native with a New England wife, had caused quite a stir with his swashbuckling ways in staid Chestertown. Purporting to have risen to the rank of general in service to the Union, Crawford, a chemist who marketed "Black Chesapeake Ink," set his assets at over \$200,000, making him the second wealthiest man in the town. As befit such a position, he immediately moved into one of the prime properties along the river, the home at the end of High Street once owned by Judge Ezekiel F. Chambers. The flamboyant intruder soon evoked the ire of the local white majority by founding a radical newspaper, the *Freedman's Journal*, staffed by blacks, that even a century later was recalled by a local white historian as including "reckless political utterances and violent editorials."¹⁹

After a full day of picnicking and speeches by Garnet, Crawford and others, at sundown the procession headed back to town. The proceedings were carried off with dignity and no disruptions. As the *Baltimore American* gushed: "No similar celebration was ever witnessed in Chestertown. In respectability of numbers, manliness of deportment, neatness of dress and citizen-like bearing, they challenged the admiration and respect of all good men in the community."²⁰

Despite the dominant number of blacks within the newly revamped Republican party, it failed to name any as a candidate. Instead, each party set forth an array of

white candidates that on paper appeared fairly indistinguishable. The Citizens ticket, comprised primarily of Democrats, consisted of a sailor, lawyer, shoemaker, bridge keeper, grocer, harness maker, and a carpenter, a representative cross section of white, middle-class Chestertown. Their assets ranged from the \$3,300 of the elderly keeper of the bridge across the Chester, John L. Ringgold, to \$28,000, for the lawyer James A. Pearce, who was born into a prominent family and eventually became a United States Senator. The Republican array was similar, including two carpenters, a grocer, a broker and a prosperous lumber merchant, William Vannort, one of Chestertown's wealthiest residents with \$100,000 in assets.²¹

When the day of parading to the voting window came, the significance of black suffrage was well understood. Although the totals varied slightly from candidate to candidate, the final tally indicated that about 130 black Republican voters joined with twenty-seven white Republicans (seven of whom were the candidates themselves) to elect a straight Republican ticket. Some 137 white conservatives found themselves out-pollled by an average margin of about twenty-two votes. The newly enfranchised black Republican voters accounted for nearly all of the party's tally. Overwhelmingly they delivered into office the seven white Republican candidates.²²

To the liberal Baltimore press, "a new era had dawned upon the people of Chestertown. The colored man has cast his ballot for the first time, and victory crowned the act." But locally the Chestertown *Transcript* observed that "the spectacle at the polls" had been "both novel and amusing." The blacks "seemed to be voting under duress of some secret organization and pledged order."²³

Both sides hurled back and forth charges of election law violations. The Republican press asserted that "every method was resorted to to intimidate the colored voter and drive him from the polls." The Democratic press replied that blacks voted without molestation and, if anything, many nonresident blacks were improperly permitted to vote. In light of the definite outcome and broad black involvement, coupled with Democratic fears that repression of the franchise would bring federal intervention, it appears that the Republican hyperbole was unwarranted. Nevertheless, all agreed that the day passed peacefully.²⁴

The most dramatic set of charges concerned allegations that an enterprising black property owner, Isaac Anderson, had taken advantage of a voting law loophole. The ballot for the town's election was available to any male who owned (or whose wife owned) real estate in the town. Though seemingly a neophyte in the electoral process, Anderson, who owned a small parcel of land on the Chester River, displayed definite political talent. A couple of weeks before the election he greatly enhanced Republican fortunes by deeding three feet, nine inches of his property to forty-four fellow African Americans in exchange for fifteen dollars. Although outrage ensued in the local press, the *Transcript* was forced to acknowledge that the same device had been used several years earlier by a group of white men. In the newspaper's view, "real estate holders were manufactured by wholesale" for the election by both parties. The Republican *Cecil Whig* gloated: "The Democracy of Kent will likely change their opinion of the colored man's political qualification if he shows such aptness already for political strategy."²⁵

Out of the debate concerning Anderson's escapades came another report, later retracted, that the three wealthiest black businessmen in town, Perkins, James Jones, and Perry Chambers, had entered the town election. The *Transcript* acknowledged that there had been talk of them running, but that white Republican leaders had discouraged it as being "too soon" for a step this dramatic.²⁶

After enduring a week within which to digest fully the significance of the Republican sweep in the town elections, the *Transcript's* editorial tone turned toward insult. The weekly proclaimed it an "unnatural proposition" that the black man should be permitted to intrude into governmental affairs. After all, in this modern "age of civilization," ours "should be a White Man's Government" and one could surely not "make white men out of niggers." The hidden benefit of the Fifteenth Amendment, the paper nevertheless suggested, was to rally Democrats and wavering Republicans to a new resolve. The "pride of race in the Caucasian element which even Mongrel influence cannot obliterate" would constrain whites to "resume control of their own government."²⁷ In large part this view, indeed, defined the next century of racial politics on the Eastern Shore.

NOTES

1. Chestertown *Transcript*, 22 January and 5 March 1870.
2. Ibid., 5 March and 2 April 1870. The staunchly Democratic Easton *Star* in neighboring Talbot County remarked with resignation, "The evil so long dreaded by all true men is upon us, and there is no way of getting rid of it." 1 March 1870.
3. Chestertown *Transcript*, 5 March, 2 and 9 April 1870.
4. Ibid., 5 March 1870. Neighboring weeklies initially came to the same conclusion. The Centreville *Observer* counseled that to ignore the black vote would be "suicidal" for the Democrats. The Cecil *Democrat*, despite its feeling that the new black voters were totally unfit for the task, urged that Democrats encourage their votes in hope that they "might assimilate to our ways." Baltimore *American*, 19 March 1870, quoting each paper.
5. United States Constitution, Amendment XV. Regarding Grant's proclamation, see Baltimore *Sun*, 31 March 1870; Baltimore *American*, 31 March 1870. Regarding Bowie's veto, see Baltimore *American*, 4 April 1870; *American Union* (Denton), 7 April 1870; Cecil *Whig*, 16 April 1870. In his inaugural address Bowie's list of aspirations of his administration was headed by "white supremacy the country over, not negro equality here in the North, and negro domination there in the South . . ." Carl N. Everstine, *The General Assembly of Maryland 1850-1920*, (Charlottesville: Michie Co., 1984), p. 279.
6. Baltimore *American*, 5 April 1870. The Chestertown *Transcript* gave this first-vote honor to Elijah Quigley. Chestertown *Transcript*, 9 April 1870.
7. Cambridge *Telegraph*, 14 May 1870.
8. Baltimore *Sun*, 11 April 1870; Baltimore *American*, 4 April 1870.
9. Chestertown *Transcript*, 9 April 1870. In neighboring Talbot County the Democratic weekly had already reached this conclusion. The Easton *Star* predicted

that "the species that is inferior to the white," would want to go to white schools, thereby driving out white pupils. "The only salvation" it saw for the "white schools, and white race, [was] for the people to maintain the supremacy of the Democratic party in the State, for only it has the numbers to control the negroes and prevent the dreaded calamity." *Easton Star*, 8 March 1870.

10. *Easton Star*, 19 April 1870; see also *Ninth Census of the United States, Statistics of Population* (Washington, D.C.: 1872), p. 164. The *Baltimore Sun* cast some doubt on this conclusion, reporting that "two tickets were found in the box with the names of negro men on them for town offices." Perhaps local officials had attempted to ignore the fact that two blacks had voted. Possibly, two white voters had cast ballots for black write-in candidates. Whatever the explanation, the white establishment of St. Michael's had postponed until a later day the need to share the ballot with its black citizens. *Baltimore Sun*, 6 April 1870.

11. *Ninth Census of the United States, Statistics of Population*, p. 164; *Easton Star*, 10 May 1870. Farther north in Elkton a different scenario played out. There, the registrar set a special two-day period in April permitting new registrations for the town's 1870 election. This added fifty black and sixteen white voters to the eligibility list. Due to being kept at a distance on these two days by work on farms or on the water, about twenty-five other black men were unable to register. On 2 May these fifty men cast their first ballots as American citizens. Although nearly all of the black votes were counted on the Republican side, Democratic candidates of the "White Man's Party" easily prevailed by a comfortable margin. *Cecil Whig*, 30 April and 7 May 1870; *Easton Star*, 16, 23 and 30 April 1870, 7 May 1870; *Chestertown Transcript*, 7 May 1870; *Baltimore Sun*, 5 May 1870.

12. Bayard Taylor, "Down the Eastern Shore," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 43 (1871):702, 704.

13. 1870 Manuscript Census (Chestertown). Wicomico Bicentennial Commission, *The 1877 Atlases and Other Early Maps of the Eastern Shore of Maryland* (Salisbury: Peninsula Press, 1976), pp. 122, 140.

14. *Baltimore Sun*, 25 April 1872 (Republican Convention), 15 April 1875 (grand jury).

15. 1870 Manuscript Census (Chestertown).

16. *Chestertown Transcript*, 16 April 1870. Richard Paul Fuke, "Hugh Lennox Bond and Radical Republican Ideology," *Journal of Southern History*, 45 (1979): 569-86. For an insight into Bond's campaign on the Shore, see *Baltimore American*, 1 July 1867.

17. This account of celebration is taken from news reports in the *Kent News*, 21 May 1870; *Chestertown Transcript*, 21 May 1870; *Baltimore American*, 23 May 1870. Richard Jones was a fifty-year-old carter, of far more modest means than James Jones. 1870 Manuscript Census (Chestertown).

18. Reyford Logan & Michael R. Winston, *Dictionary of American Negro Biography* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1982), 252-53; Leroy Graham, *Baltimore, the Nineteenth Century Black Capitol*, (Washington: University Press of America, 1982), 168-69; George Bragg, *Men of Maryland* (Baltimore: Church Advocate Press, 1925), 54-57.

19. Chestertown Transcript, 2 and 26 February 1870 (Chesapeake ink); 1870 Manuscript Census; Frederick G. and William B. Usilton III, *History of Kent County, Maryland* (Chestertown: Perry Publications, 1980), pp. 144–45. William Usilton in 1980 claimed that Crawford's wealth and military status "turned out to be a myth, and he went broke and left town and [had] not since been heard from." Ibid., p. 145.

20. *Baltimore American*, 23 May 1870.

21. Ibid., 26 May 1870 (list of candidates); 1870 Manuscript Census (candidates' assets and employment). Five of the seven Republicans would form its unopposed, all-white slate a year later and ease into office with 186 votes, 165 of which were from black voters. *Kent News*, 27 May 1871.

22. The Chestertown election is reported in *Kent News*, 28 May 1870; *Chestertown Transcript*, 28 May 1870; *Baltimore American*, 26 May 1870. Only one black man, thirty-five-year-old Richard Reed, one of the town's barbers, voted for the "White Man's Party." *Chestertown Transcript*, 28 May 1870. The population of Chestertown in 1870 was 43.2 percent black. *Ninth Census of the United States, Statistics of Population*, p. 164. Blacks cast 44 percent of all votes in the town's 1870 election.

23. *Baltimore American*, 26 May 1870; *Chestertown Transcript*, 28 May 1870.

24. Ibid.; *Chestertown Transcript*, 28 May 1870.

25. *Chestertown Transcript*, 28 May and 11 June 1870; *Cambridge Telegraph*, 14 May 1870; *Cecil Whig*, 14 May and 4 June 1870. Crawford's paper, the *Freeman's Journal*, first broke the story that one square foot of land was sold to ninety-four Democrats. See *American Union* (Denton), 20 October 1870. The property ownership provision had been enacted by the legislature in 1868. Race played no part in it and many protested its imposition at a rally at the Town Hall. *Kent News*, 25 April and 23 May 1868.

26. *Cecil Whig*, 4 and 11 June 1870; *Chestertown Transcript*, 11 June 1870.

27. *Chestertown Transcript*, 4 June 1870.

An Interview with Gloria Richardson

Dandridge

PETER S. SZABO

In the summer of 1963, Cambridge, Maryland, made national news headlines when civil rights protests sparked an angry racial conflict. The catalyst for conflict in Cambridge was a black woman, Gloria Richardson. Earlier in the year, Richardson had attended a meeting of the Cambridge City Council. When her turn to speak came, Richardson rose and called for immediate desegregation of public facilities, equal employment opportunities, and the revival of a public housing project in the city's all-black second ward. Words grew heated, and the chamber erupted into a shouting match. Days later, non-violent demonstrations began. Cambridge's spiraling racial conflict was under way.

Gloria Richardson was a forty-year-old mother of two when, in 1962, she assumed leadership of the Cambridge Non-violent Action Committee (CNAC), the organization that had begun to spearhead civil rights activism in Cambridge in 1961. Born in Baltimore in 1922, Richardson grew up in Cambridge in relative affluence, a member of the prominent St. Clair family. Her grandfather, Herbert St. Clair, Sr., was the first black member of the city council, serving from 1912 to 1946. A Howard University graduate in 1942, Richardson recently had divorced and was managing the family drug store when she took over CNAC.

During the summer of 1963, Richardson served as the de facto head of the black community in Cambridge. She organized and led protests, negotiated with political leaders in Cambridge and state government, and brought the demands of the community to the U.S. Justice Department in Washington. In late July, an agreement brokered by Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy brought relative peace to Cambridge. Richardson was honored as a Woman of the Civil Rights Movement at the March on Washington the next month. Yet her distance from the mainstream of the Martin Luther King-led civil rights movement was illustrated by her defiant opposition to the September, 1963, referendum on desegregation of public accommodations in Cambridge (she felt blacks should not be voting for rights they already had) and, beginning in November, 1963, by her growing sympathies with Malcolm X, particularly after he left the Nation of Islam.

At the end of summer in 1964, Richardson married Frank Dandridge, a black free-lance photographer who had covered events in Cambridge, and moved to New

A Rockville native, Mr. Szabo serves as deputy commissioner for policy and planning, Connecticut Department of Transportation.

York City along with her two daughters. She then resigned from the chairmanship of CNAC and from the board of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which had helped to organize CNAC.

In New York, Richardson did some part-time work for SNCC and later became an employee at HarYouAct, a Harlem-based organization that administered several programs focusing on youths and poverty for New York City. She went to work for New York City government in the early 1980s and now is an employee of the Department of Aging.

News photographs from the summer of 1963 show her to be slight and graceful. Yet, her deep, dark eyes, permanent scowl, and stiff jaw conveyed the utter seriousness and intellect she brought to the leadership of the Cambridge struggle.

It was that same intensity that I encountered on a cold, rainy February afternoon in 1992 when I interviewed Richardson, then sixty-nine years of age, in her New York apartment. She greeted me with a polite smile and a firm handshake. She wore a white blouse, blue jeans and bright new sneakers. The apartment was neat and modestly sized. I noted a large, framed promotional poster for SNCC, a period piece, on the wall as I sat down. She sat opposite me, I started my tape recorder, and she began to speak. Though she had not lived in Maryland in more than thirty years, her melodious voice still bore easily identifiable traces of a watery, Eastern Shore accent. Throughout the conversation, her cadence would rise steadily and then peak just as she reached something she wanted to emphasize. Interrupted occasionally by an asthmatic cough, Richardson nevertheless exuded energy and punctuated her remarks with animated hand gestures. We spoke for more than two hours.

Excerpts from that interview follow. The transcript was edited down in length so as to provide more focus. Halting words or phrases were removed for clarity.

PSS: *How did you first get involved in the civil rights movement?*

GRD: The Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) had come into Baltimore at the request of the NAACP for a direct-action attack on public accommodations in Maryland. In that process, because the governor lived on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in Crisfield [J. Millard Tawes served as Maryland's governor from 1959 to 1967], that Christmas they followed him down the shore all the way into Crisfield and they were coming back. My uncle [Herbert St. Clair] and cousin [Frederick St. Clair] were providing bail bond for those people who were arrested, and that's how they met some of the SNCC people. In the meantime, my cousin told them that Cambridge was pretty bad off in terms of segregation and that they needed to stop there for a while.

So, two of the field secretaries—at that point SNCC had one black and one white—Bill Hansen and Reginald Robinson came and stayed at my uncle's house. I think they had been there almost three or four weeks before I realized they were there, although it was just about a block down the street from me. But I was working,

managing, the drugstore and that was about a twelve-hour day. So, that and running the house, I hadn't really focused on anything else until they came to my door. My uncle told them that if they needed guides . . . my daughter [Donna Richardson] always had a lot of teenagers around. And they came to ask if there were high school students who would be willing to act as guides, which they were. And then they became involved, and they took over the daily picketing—people came in from other parts of the country on weekends. And it pretty much brought the town to, I guess as they say, to their knees.

My oldest daughter was one of the leaders. Parents acted as observers when they went out to demonstrate and what not, and to have some kind of factual base on what was going on. The ministers and the "Negro leadership" at that point decided that, and agreed with the white leadership, that they couldn't negotiate as long as demonstrations were going on and they needed peace. Well, everybody agreed and all the older people that weren't out there at risk proceeded to have peace. And that started lasting one week, two weeks, three weeks, four weeks. The young people got very discouraged. They had been able to plan strategies, have the demonstrations, do the signs, decide where they were going to attack next—and kept their grades up. However, once this happened it was like depression set in and we started sliding. So at that point the people in the community sent me and my cousin's wife [Yolanda St. Clair] down to Atlanta to formalize the relationship between SNCC and Cambridge.

PSS: *Is this when the Cambridge Non-violent Action Committee was formed?*

GRD: Yes, the younger people had become the Cambridge Non-violent Action Committee (CNAC). My cousin [Frederick St. Clair] and Enez Grubb had become chairman and co-chairman. And you had about fifteen people as observers and advisors, adult advisors. Those adult advisors really, once the kids got discouraged, moved in to replace them.

PSS: *So how did you become the head of CNAC?*

GRD: My cousin resigned because he felt it was a conflict between providing bail and being in a leadership position in the movement. And the town got together and asked me to take that position, mainly because they felt that my family could support me and I would not be in that economically vulnerable a position. And I guess that they trusted me. That lasted for almost a year. Enez got sick and had to retire from that position at that point, which left me there. . . .

It was really a community organizing effort. Holding small meetings every week in various places. Organizing the community almost like you would politically, you know, with wards and districts, and this person is the key person in this neighborhood or street and what not. And those people formed what was the executive board of the Cambridge Non-violent Action Committee.

PSS: *Where did the organizational model come from? SNCC?*

GRD: SNCC, yes. Because I don't think we would have been able to do anything. The NAACP, of course, was highly structured. It was then, I assume it is now. And things happened so fast once we started that you would not have been able to sit still and wait until a committee with a lot of people came back with a report, and

wait another month while they acted on it. So there had to be a fluid situation where, yes, you could get input from the community, but yet you could continue to move forward.

PSS: *What were the primary goals of CNAC at that point?*

GRD: Initially it was the public accommodations and recreations facilities, and the pool, and that kind of thing. Over the following—I don't know whether we did that the first thing, I think the second summer—I designed a survey [of the black community] to prioritize what people really needed. And community people and high school students went from door to door with a check off in terms of health problems, jobs, housing, public accommodations also. . . .

Swarthmore students at that time were coming in and out of Cambridge [the connection to Swarthmore was made through Stanley Branche, head of the Chester, Pennsylvania chapter of the NAACP, who was often in Cambridge supporting CNAC], and they took the results and the survey forms back to Swarthmore and the professors there did the correlations and what not. I forget now which was first. What it ultimately meant to us was that we were going to have to attack the whole thing at one time—the housing, the health, because it made very little difference. I think maybe health may have come first and housing second, and schools, but it wasn't that much difference when those compilations came back.

PSS: *Was there any push for voting rights?*

GRD: Well, yes, the first fall we went through a voter registration and education campaign. That was essentially a tactic to show the people in the county and the city, blacks, that it wasn't going to make any difference. They had been voting since the mid-1800s. My grandfather [Herbert St. Clair, Sr.] had been . . . city councilman for about fifty years. . . . In his time I can remember he could get things maybe like parking tickets voided . . . and paroles, and some stop lights, and part of the town paved, and was able because of his relationship with the packing company to see that food came out in the winter when people weren't working. Those kinds of things. And he was a gradualist. So in terms of actually desegregating the schools, and the hospital, and what not, I'm sure it occurred, at least, to argue with somebody, but that was going to take time. . . . And actually there was nobody . . . in north Dorchester [schools]. I think they had one [black] student. . . . All the records that had gone from Maryland up to Washington, I guess from Cambridge to the state, indicated that it was, in fact, desegregated, and it didn't occur to them that it was just desegregated on paper. We had to keep saying, "you go down, you go to schools, you go to places where you see them, blacks, and you don't have any whites." And finally it got through to them that this was just on paper. And they were happy with it on paper, because the burden was on black parents, who worked for the white political people in town, to force the issue of sending their child to another school.

PSS: *In 1963, what role did the U.S. Justice Department play in brokering the agreement to end the June/July stalemate in Cambridge?*

GRD: One of the things that we had was that, because we were close to Washington, that it should be fairly easy, if we could create enough chaos, to attract

their attention and kind of force their hand. . . . And we happily succeeded in doing that.

Robert Kennedy initially, I guess, was probably infuriated. Once he saw the survey and he realized the abject poverty we had, he almost did an about face, and from that time on was very supportive.

PSS: *How was the survey communicated to him?*

GRD: We took it there. And before, people in Cambridge were saying this was a lie. But because the Swarthmore, and I don't remember the names now, the Swarthmore professors were noted sociologists . . . he could not say that this was wrong, and they had validated the instrument in terms of its effectiveness. So, when he looked at the census, of course the census told a different story. The census really wasn't geared to see what a black population [experienced,] . . . it just came out with overall stuff, 9 percent unemployment when actually in the black community it was something like 42 or 43 percent.

Also, [State Adjutant General George] Gelston was in there with the National Guard then and his guardsmen had taken, as he said, they probably weren't integrationists, but they were very annoyed . . . they had to take a lot of punishment from the white community. They threw stones, they spit on them. . . . We felt they were protecting the white community, the white community felt they were protecting us. But in the meantime, because, I guess, of the nature of the older people in the black community, and in the summertime, you know, they would take them lemonade, and cookies, and stuff . . . as long as the guardsmen would maintain their demeanor. . . .

Gelston also became an advocate, and they [the whites] really went to Washington to see if they could get him fired. But they couldn't. Because he was a two-star general in the army and he had relationships with the Kennedys, other Kennedys, and with Sargent Shriver. So, there wasn't anything very much they could do about that. But because of those people, I think, you know, it was very helpful. They'd tell you, "Cambridge was different, it didn't happen like that in the rest of the country," but that is really true.

Gelston did what he had to do and he upheld his end of it, but he also was very fair. And I guess it was like a benevolent take-over.

PSS: *And this was going on one or two months after Birmingham?*

GRD: Yes. Some of it was during Birmingham, because the press . . . would come and ask us, "Why don't you all wait until after Birmingham?" . . . They either covered it or they didn't, you know, I didn't understand what Birmingham did that you would rather move forward or not. And besides, I would think strategically that it would be better for two or three areas to be moving forward at the same time.

PSS: *What role do you think the press played in the Cambridge conflict?*

GRD: Well I think initially they were kind of hostile. . . . So, we went through a process of trying to educate them. Once they started coming in and they began to find out what was really going on, I think their attitude changed so that they delved more into it, and their reporting, even if they didn't agree with how we were doing it, certainly understood that there were problems there that needed to be solved. . . . Also, in the

last year and a half, if they were gonna stay after everything was over they had to stay in the black community. Because they were from the North and they were either Italian or Jewish, or, I guess anything except what they [Cambridge whites] thought they [themselves] were— . . . Anglo-Saxon Protestant. And so they would call them names, all the epithets and what not, and throw things at them too. . . . So now the press is also determined that they're gonna get the story. So they usually were always there, which was really kind of a protection for us, because sometimes they [angry whites] wouldn't do quite the things they had in mind, because they didn't want the cameras to catch them.

PSS: *Was media exposure helpful in raising money, or in getting credibility?*

GRD: We didn't raise that much money. Most of it came from local people. For a while, until I endorsed Malcolm X, we had a little money that came in from a couple of the unions [the Meat Packers and the International Ladies Garment Workers] there that would pay for cleaning and stuff like that. And then they withdrew it because they didn't like my position on that and since I wouldn't go back on it.

We used to have dances in the Elks home. . . . People that did not march or demonstrate would also have suppers and things, or keep people in their house . . . or then they set up their own little spy network. So there were a variety of roles that were not necessarily [high profile]. . . . I think that was difficult at first for the opposition to understand, because they couldn't just go and count the people themselves. They did not realize the network that had gradually been built up.

PSS: *What was the contact with Martin Luther King, if any?*

GRD: It was very little and always negative. Initially when SNCC had first come in . . . we had gone to a meeting and a decision had been made to invite Martin to come to Cambridge to speak and they thought that would be a jumping off point. We wrote, and he sent back that he was very busy, booked for the next couple of years, and that at that time if we still wanted him we would have to have \$3,000 . . . which was really a favor as far as I can see now because then we had to do it ourselves, without that prophetic, charismatic . . . leadership. So we did.

About a year and a half later, after the all press got in and Danville [Virginia] also was jumping off [Danville was the scene of a major civil rights fight at that time], he sent word—told the press he was coming in to Cambridge and to Danville to look it over. I don't know what the SNCC people who tried to get along with him said in Danville. . . . But anyhow, I told the press to go back and tell him that I said when he hit the Bay Bridge, not the Bay Bridge, the Emerson Harrington Bridge [now the Frederick C. Malkus Sr. Bridge, which carries Route 50 over the Choptank River near Cambridge], we would be there to turn him back. So he announced he had the flu and he did not come. . . .

By that time everybody in Cambridge . . . realized that he must know this is a small, poor town. And to ask for \$3,000 in advance . . . just to come in one day, not to come to organize. And by this time of course SNCC people had exposed themselves, they had gone to jail, they had done a fantastic job also of organizing the northern student movement, and CORE had been in . . . people really respected

the students from SNCC. And they didn't need anything else once the local leadership was developed. Because that was the other thing that SNCC did was to see that local leadership did develop.

PSS: *What were the relationships between the Cambridge movement and the national civil rights organizations?*

GRD: Well, the NAACP was helpful in the beginning. I think my mother [Mable Hayes] and daughter [Donna] and I even have an award from them. In the fall of '61, either the fall of '61 or '62, when we got ready to put black kids in the white high schools and they were supposed to go into federal court and file suit, at about ten o'clock that morning, after those kids were in those schools, they sent us word that the national office told them to stay out. So that was that. We went to Baltimore and convinced the American Civil Liberties Union lawyer that civil rights was not that far from the premises of civil liberties. He agreed to represent us, and at that point we didn't use the NAACP lawyers any more.

That was one break. The second break was when we boycotted the referendum [on the desegregation of public facilities in the fall of 1963]. . . . [The NAACP] sent two field secretaries down here that had already been in to Cambridge to set up whatever they could against the local [black] leadership because they didn't approve of boycotting And also, SCLC . . . the Cambridge movement wasn't non-violent enough for them.

PSS: *What was the role of non-violence in your thinking at that time?*

GRD: It was purely a tactical thing. There were some people at SNCC that [saw it] really, almost as a religion, and that whole Gandhi concept. I never saw it as that. I saw it as a tactic, because certainly you couldn't start out picking up guns running out in the street or you'd be slaughtered. But, to create as much chaos as you could with it, and if violence was perpetuated against you, that as long as there wasn't a demonstration going on, you had the right to defend yourself. And that is, in essence, what we did. The people that committed themselves to at least tactical non-violence would never fight someone with violence if there were demonstrations. But sometimes it was a fine line, because by the time we would get back, maybe almost into our community, something would break out . . .

PSS: *What was your experience at the March on Washington when you were honored as one of the "Women of the Civil Rights Movement"?*

GRD: Oh, there was a big to-do about that, because they didn't want me there, and then finally, I don't know who, somebody insisted that I would have to be there. . . . The NAACP called me and told me that they didn't want me to wear pants. So I went all over the Eastern Shore of Maryland looking for a jeans skirt—which they didn't have very many of then, though I did manage to find one—and a blouse. [Laughter] I wasn't going to get dressed up.

We got a large group of people that went to Washington. . . . And then when we got up on the stage they had removed my chair. . . . I thought, "I don't even know why I am here." I went in the back because there were some people there and some lawyers that I knew and there were some things we needed done in Cambridge. So I went back to politic. I thought they would just totally forget me, but then somebody

must have said something and they called me [to speak]. . . . I think I opened my mouth, I don't know what I said, but they didn't let me say over five words because somebody from the NAACP took the microphone away from me

PSS: *What difference did your being a woman and a leader make?*

GRD: [Laughter] I only think about that now. I certainly didn't think about it then. I can remember, I don't even know who they were, people calling me and asking me, "Are you having trouble as a woman?" I thought, "What the hell are they talking about?" And it's not since I had got out of that and came to New York that it began to dawn on me. . . . In Cambridge, because we lived on a day-to-day basis once everything jelled, in a life-and-death, just about, situation, for that period of time at least, gender considerations were not there. . . . I was on a radio show [sometime later] with Roy Innis from CORE, and . . . he said I had castrated him. But that really wasn't true because it was the men that protected the community, and had to lay out in those fields with guns all night. They understood exactly what was going on and so did the women. Those men that thought they could be non-violent enough to go in the marches did. Those that didn't did other things.

PSS: *I want to ask you a little bit about the public accommodations referendum. Why did you choose to oppose the vote?*

GRD: Because I thought that since we were born in this country that we shouldn't have to [vote to obtain rights]. That was the feeling in the community. People liked to say I must be putting these ideas in people's heads, but that really wasn't true. I think it was sort of organic, you know, it was always there. And it came out here. There were Korean and World War II veterans, and they really did not see why they should vote on whether they could go, as they said, into a little greasy restaurant. . . . People really felt that if they were born in this country and they had helped to build the country, they had no business voting on anything—the rights should have been there. It shouldn't have been up for question. The only reason why it was was because of this racist thing. If they [the whites] wanted to vote on it, fine, let them do it. And that, essentially, was what we did.

There were ministers who tried to fight against that, and they said they could bring out the vote. White folks there told people that worked for them, in factories and what not, that if they didn't vote, that they would fire them. So they went, I think, and voted whichever would have been the wrong way.

PSS: *Just before the vote, you resigned and then you withdrew your resignation. What precipitated that?*

GRD: That's because somebody [Reginald Robinson] came up from SNCC and went around to people on my executive board and . . . indicated to them that I was going to go vote. . . . At that particular time, because I was trying not to say what we were going to do, I was trying to let people say what they were going to do. I had not said anything except that, to say that people we aren't going to vote on that. But anyhow he made them believe that. So then they came and they started yelling and screaming at me. I guess I was very tired. I thought, "Well I don't need this either!" And I resigned. Then I found out what happened. And then people started coming asking me not to.

PSS: *What happened in Cambridge after the public accommodations vote?*

GRD: That's when Adam [Clayton Powell] came down and spoke and they put that food and stuff in there over the governor's head between him and the Kennedy administration. The people in Cambridge refused to distribute, so the Guard distributed it. At that time what happened is white folks started calling us on the telephone telling us that they were on welfare and they needed food, but they had told them that if they went out and got any of that food, or if they saw them on the lines, they were either gonna fire them or take them off welfare or whatever . . . and that they couldn't come, and what could they do? CNAC proceeded to get cars and loaded them up with food . . . and went and took the food to them. Subsequently, I think they finally got enough nerve to begin to come out.

While all this was going on and the Guard was there, labor unions were organizing there among blacks and whites. The white community shut them out, so they were meeting in the black rod and gun club right out in the middle of all this shooting and other stuff that was going on.

But that was because black and white people both needed more money and needed a union rather than each of them fighting for the other's job. . . . They were working together and they had to come out to the black community in order to meet. That was the meat packers union, I think. There were two unions in there that came in, the meat packers union and the garment workers.

PSS: *Were they successful?*

GRD: Yes. In that part of it. But what had happened was we had gone to a couple of meetings over on the other side of town where union organizers had come down from New York, and we had gone in to fight for black folk. And then when we got there, we ended up fighting for them all, because while there were some black folks in there to stand up and voice their complaints, the white folks would stand but they would come up and just go, "Would you tell me about that . . . ?" You know, it was weird, it was mind boggling. So then everybody stood up and said, "She's gonna stay." So, it's really very strange because we also were fighting these other things that probably most of them, I would assume most of them, didn't want to go on, in terms of desegregation.

PSS: *Did you travel to other areas of activism around the country in 1963 or 1964?*

GRD: I used to go down to Maryland State in Princess Anne. I went to Chester, Pennsylvania, several times. . . . I would go back and forth to Atlanta. I came to New York a couple of times to support efforts up here, the World's Fair and a school demonstration. We had invitations to go other places, but most of the time there was so much turmoil always there [in Cambridge], and of course the thing was you didn't leave there unless it was more or less calm. . . . I went to California to speak. . . . Howard [University] had a chapter of SNCC and they used to come up from time to time. . . . Also, in Baltimore, another SNCC group. . . . Usually that was in the winter or maybe the early spring . . . but that also was the time that we traveled to Washington, back and forth, and tried to pitch our stories or write letters back and forth building up the plan of what we were going to have to do later on in the year.

PSS: *What was your experience with the FBI in Cambridge?*

GRD: My first husband [Harry Richardson] came to me one time during a demonstration to tell me I should give it up because the FBI had come and told him—whatever they told him he thought he was going to take the children. I couldn't believe that. I thought at first, because there is an expression in the black community, "Oh, the FBI said that," so I thought he was just saying that. But I said, "You mean some people actually came there?" And so, he went, "Yes." So I said, "Well you go back and just tell them I said to go to hell, and you, too."

FBI had the lines tapped so well that even Gelston couldn't get his lines cleared. And there was a period of time where he would send his guy down in a jeep to either hand deliver us an answer, or whatever negotiations that were going on at that time, or to tell us.

PSS: *Eventually, you became more closely aligned with Malcolm X. How did you get to know him?*

GRD: Before I had met him, people in Philadelphia that lived in Cambridge were always coming in and out of Cambridge and talking about Malcolm X. I saw him, I think, on television once or twice, or heard him on the radio. . . . Once he got past that religious thing I thought, "Well you know a lot of that is true." I went to Detroit to a grass roots conference [in November, 1963] that was being held initially in Aretha Franklin's father's church. People came and told me that I was in the wrong place, which I was because SCLC had come up and they were trying to take over and be a northern movement. So I left and went over to Reverend Albert Cleage's church because they said Malcolm was over there. . . . They asked me up on the platform, and I heard him speak, and I met him then. . . . After that when I came to New York and I went to one of his meetings at the Audubon—I don't know whether I spoke or not. . . . I know I was on the platform. In and among that time a group of people formed Act. They were more northern but were disappointed with the NAACP and had their own movements in neighborhoods or areas and had formed kind of a loose coalition. Lawrence Landry in Chicago with the schools, Adam [Clayton Powell] was part of that, Malcolm agreed to become part of that. . . .

We had a meeting in Chester, Pennsylvania, and Malcolm came. And that's when he agreed to—the country had not committed itself to certain kinds of things and desegregation policies—to ask people to withhold their vote . . . on the theory that they needed at least 20 or 25 percent of the black vote . . . and anyhow, to just let them fight it out for themselves. And he agreed to do that. Of course he didn't live long enough to do it.

After he came back from Africa, I was up here by that time, I talked to him several times on the phone, and I had agreed at that point to become part of whatever organization he set up here in New York.

PSS: *So, you had discussions about philosophy and tactics with him?*

GRD: Well, not really, I think we understood each other. I mean, I don't even think I said to him, "You know, you really need to get away from Elijah Muhammad" [at that time, head of the Nation of Islam]. But I remember the night he was getting ready to make the announcement, my husband and I were up in a restaurant in

Harlem and he stopped by the table . . . and said, "Listen to the 11 o'clock news, I think you are going to hear something that you will like."

I think people in our part of the movement, unless there was some reason to have a long philosophical discussion, which people certainly did [laughter]—on and on!—I don't think you needed that to know that you thought the same.

PSS: *What were the elements of the thinking that you shared?*

GRD: That blacks certainly were not getting a fair shake in this country. That that could not continue to happen. That, over a period of time, the government had first given and then taken away. That the governmental structure used a lot of black folks that had "made it" as their examples of "see how we're treating everybody." Whereas the majority of grassroots people—as opposed to middle class blacks—were still probably where they were just after the Civil War.

PSS: *How did that thinking differ from what Martin Luther King was talking about?*

GRD: I think Martin Luther King had a more middle-class group. . . . Parts of SNCC believed that you should be totally non-violent and lay down and let them step on you. And other parts didn't. But I certainly didn't believe, I know Malcolm didn't, that you were not supposed to defend yourself. Martin apparently believed you weren't supposed to do that.

I can remember people in Cambridge . . . were putting red pepper in their cuffs, and spreading it around to chase the dogs. Well, you know, they told me, "Oh no, we couldn't do that. That's violence." They carried it really to the extreme. . . . Someone told me at a conference I went to a couple of years ago that Martin really wanted people to love him. It didn't matter, I think, to most of us whether people loved us or not. Respect? Yes. That's a whole different piece that's left up to individuals.

PSS: *So, what Malcolm X was talking about was, on the practical political level, more idealistic. For example, saying "No, this is right and this is what we stand for," rather than, "this is right but we'll take half of it."*

GRD: Yes, you're right. No, we wouldn't take half of it. And I must say, in Cambridge, although some of it continued to happen after I left, but the initial demands, we got. . . . One way they got to build those houses was because they used Cambridge contractors, and we would have preferred them going somewhere else to get contractors. But that was one of the things we had to proceed to agree to to get those houses built. I guess Washington thought that would help ease tension.

PSS: *Let's move a few years ahead, now. How did you play a role in Rap Brown's visit to Cambridge in 1967?*

GRD: My daughter [Donna] was there, and she had called me the night of the fire. They told me I'd better get somebody down there quick. . . . What had happened was they had changed the name [of CNAC] to the Cambridge Black Action Federation. Elaine Adams and that group had sent me money and had asked me to ask Rap to come down and speak . . . about black power. . . . And I did that when I saw Rap over at the SNCC fund-raising office around the corner.

At about that time Gelston called me, because he said he wanted to set up something that would contain whatever Cambridge police might try to do, and he

would like to speak with Rap before he went in. So I went to tell Rap. Rap, of course, he was not going to speak to any white man. I said, "Cambridge is very strange, I think you better speak with him." "No," [Brown replied.] So I told him no. In the meantime, Gelston did tell me that if anybody needed him then this is where he would be staying. I initially forgot, because I had not been in any of those places that had been built, any of the hotels and what not, so I had the wrong hotel . . . I had to end up calling his wife, who had just talked to him and everything was quiet . . . I had to finally tell her, "My daughter is there, Miss, she's calling me, the firemen didn't come in, the coals are flying all over," and she finally called him. And then somebody called me from the press and told me that the Guard was on its way. . . .

The government sent in people—that's when [Maryland governor Spiro] Agnew was there—they sent in people to, if we drew up the plans they'd do a proposal. . . . So we were doing parks, we were doing mobile homes, with temporary things 'till stuff was getting built. . . . Anything else that was left over from the two years or three years before—got agreement on it from Washington . . . Agnew stopped it. That was it. They did not control him like they did Tawes, and it fell apart at that point. . . . I think the [federal] government was sincere at that time, but it was just that Agnew said no. He hated Rap Brown. He hated Stokely Carmichael. "These were thugs." . . . He made the mistake of standing up and calling them thugs. That's after they'd been up all night long trying to put out the fires. . . . I think it was finally some people way down, what we consider really racist part of the county, that let them have a fire truck. Because the city wouldn't.

PSS: *Reflecting on your experience and what you have witnessed since, how would you assess the role of violence and non-violence in effecting change?*

GRD: I think you have to have some of both. And I think it has to be in balance. I think the violence can only be in response, because the people that really will move in to try to stamp out something with violence are not going to stop because you are non-violent. They will crush you first. So if there isn't some kind of tension set up so that it will at least hold them off a little, then you are just demolished, especially if you are carrying this out on a day-to-day basis. Maybe it might be different if you were just having a once-every-three-months march, or a once-a-year march, or that kind of thing. But on a day-to-day basis, that tension cannot just be held back by non-violence. I think if they had thought that everybody in Cambridge in the black community was non-violent they would have just rolled right on over us. . . .

Very few young people today know that young people actually started a movement in this country from which the free speech movement came, the women's movement, the peace movement. Young, very young people making decisions and having the courage to go on and be that sensitive to problems of other people, and to mainly poor people.

Book Reviews

The Last Generation: A History of a Chesapeake Shipbuilding Family. By Geoffrey M. Footner. (Solomons, Md.: Calvert Marine Press, 1991. Pp. 194. \$37.50.)

Topically, this book is the story of a shipbuilding family of the Chesapeake Bay and their five generations from 1800 until the 1930s. As a story of the family alone it is a fascinating narrative, but historically it is an account of a much larger portion of American maritime history.

In this perspective the story begins with John Davis, a young shipbuilder at the end of the eighteenth century in St. Michaels on the Chesapeake Eastern Shore. The shipyards in this area on the Miles River were then enjoying increasing activity. The industry there had evolved from a misty background that probably began from fishing craft built to a higher standard. At this juncture the product going into the nineteenth century was the soon to be recognized privateer schooner evolving from a pilot schooner type. This was the beginning of the Davis shipbuilding experience. It was the beginning of the legacy of Clarence E. Davis and the M. M. Davis and Son Shipyard at Solomons, Maryland.

The story of the Davis family is a long one full of successes and failures during the nineteenth century. Moving from their beginnings in Talbot County to Dorchester County to the several Chesapeake islands, they were always occupied with boat building. Their occupation with the building of native boats reveals an interesting fact, that the fishermen and watermen who used the boats were not their own builders. The Davis Family, whether it was John, George, Isaac, or other sons or brothers, built working boats, the typical Chesapeake Bay craft which involved traditional structure—market schooners, pungys, bugeyes, boats that carried produce, freight and “drudged” for oysters. They were in the first rank of the maritime world of the Chesapeake. The core of the Davis family arrived on the western shore in 1879 to establish the shipyard at Solomons, Maryland. This shipyard, M. M. Davis & Son, built work boats and commercial craft of high quality until the mid-1920s, except during World War I. Then the M. M. Davis & Son shipyard established an Atlantic Coast record in constructing wooden vessels—when they launched and delivered boats, including a wooden 267-foot steam freighter in 1917 and a 133-foot seagoing tug.

But in the twentieth century wood as a shipbuilding material soon became a luxury. The oyster industry no longer operated from the decks of bugeyes, oyster sloops, or pungys. The work boats for dredging oysters that had established themselves in the 1880s were cheaply built, slab-sided, flat-bottom centerboarders of fifty feet, more or less, with two sails, jib and main. Sometimes officially referred to as two-sail batteaux, they were popularly known as skipjacks. No shipwright’s skill was required to build them, no complexity of lofting curved frames for a shapely sailing hull. A skipjack was an enlarged skiff, and they were built on nearly every

waterman's home yard. By the turn of the twentieth century there were thousands of them—hauling and scraping the oyster beds of the Chesapeake.

So by the mid-1920's it was clear that M. M. Davis & Son's shipyard's future was in building yachts, and they built some of the finest yachts in the country. The designers of the yachts, whose offices and clients were from the northeast and New England, were the most well known and capable naval architects in America.

The author utilizes 70 percent of this book to describe the yachts built at M. M. Davis's yard in Solomons, and it is a worthy description. These boats are a part of yachting history now, as are their sailors, owners, and designers. It is the last generation who built them and left us their heritage.

There are three appendices in the book that are most useful and interesting. Appendix A is a list of the names, dates, and type of vessels built by the Davis family from 1804 to 1885. Appendix B is a similar list of vessels from 1883 to 1937; and Appendix C of the vessels built since 1937 under the ownership of G. H. Townsend, to 1948.

This work is a fine reference and an especially notable history of a most important shipbuilding sector of Chesapeake Bay.

THOMAS C. GILLMER
Annapolis

The Great Road: The Building of the Baltimore and Ohio, the Nation's First Railroad, 1828-1853. By James D. Dilts. (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1993. Pp. 472. Notes, works cited, index. \$60.)

In his prologue, James D. Dilts sums up the significance of *The Great Road*: "The conception and founding of the Baltimore and Ohio was the single most important business decision made in Maryland during the first half of the nineteenth century. Building the railroad became Baltimore's greatest civic project. It was considered a national endeavor at the time, and its history is to a large extent the history of all early American railroads."

The 472-page book spans just twenty-five years, from when the first stone was laid on 4 July 1828 to 1 April 1853 when the road officially opened to Wheeling, Virginia, on the Ohio River, one of the nation's great avenues of trade. Those years witnessed a struggle among three states (Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania) and six cities (Baltimore, Washington, Philadelphia, New York, Pittsburgh, and Richmond) for one railroad.

The Great Road, really a saga, is told in the broad context of the times. The push was to reach the richness of the western frontier with turnpikes, the National Road, canals (then the prevailing technology), and, lastly, the railroad. All canals, such as the Erie, were part of the thrust west, but the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, a bothersome rival for the B&O in financing, court battles, rights of way, and competition for revenue, is a strong counterpoint in *The Great Road*.

Dilts excels with illuminating portraits of those involved—the three railroad presidents: Philip E. Thomas, who conceived and organized the road; Louis McLane,

“the Consummate diplomat,” later minister to England on the Oregon Question; and Thomas Swann, prominent member of the Know-Nothing Party, later mayor of Baltimore. Secondary figures include the sons of the famed architect, Benjamin Henry Latrobe—John H. B., the company’s general counsel, and Benjamin H. Jr., the chief engineer—John Pendleton Kennedy, Peter Cooper, Ross Winans, Daniel Webster, Roger Brooke Taney, and Samuel F. B. Morse.

The company dealt endlessly with the legislatures of Maryland and Virginia. Politicians were offered bribes and corrupted in many ways. Financing was so difficult that at one point Swann considered appealing to the citizens of Baltimore “by going door to door, soliciting their aid.”

Reaching the Ohio—a distance of 350 railroad miles—often seemed an impossible goal. Routes were surveyed over and over. The single track line was forced through meandering river valleys and two hundred miles of mountain wilderness. It took five thousand men with picks and shovels and one thousand horses five years to complete the job. Laborers were paid eighty-seven and one-half cents a day. Supervising engineers had to contend with contractors who could not complete their work, floods, landslides, cholera epidemics, strikes, and rioting between workers from different counties in Ireland. On that formidable stretch were fourteen tunnels and 114 bridges.

When the line opened, trainmen were scalded by exploding boilers, killed or injured during collisions and derailments, and even by “snakeheads,” loose rails that curled up and speared through the bottoms of wooden cars. Official summaries of employees losing hands, arms and legs “read like battlefield casualty reports.” One doctor told President McLane that he would attend to all amputations without charge if he were given “a free ticket.”

The author is absorbed with minute technical detail—perhaps too much except for specialists—in the development of the steam engine from English experimental ones to the first coal-burning locomotives produced in quantity for American railroads. This is also true of the precise descriptions of rails—wood, stone, and iron—and the wide variety of ballast used to support them. But *The Great Road*, more importantly, is a fine study on how the railroad stimulated economic and social growth in Baltimore, the population explosion in Cumberland (though Horace Greeley overestimated its importance by predicting that it was destined “to become one of the largest inland towns in America”), and in Wheeling, which expanded from a frontier village of rivermen and teamsters to an industrial and commercial center, the most important between Pittsburgh and Cincinnati. The book has fifty-four illustrations and thirteen maps. A deftly drawn modern map tracing the main line and the branches would be easier to follow than some of the nineteenth-century examples.

Dilts, a former reporter for the *Baltimore Sun*, spent seventeen years in researching and writing this history, and walked many miles of track in Maryland and West Virginia. The thoroughness of the research and the enthusiasm for his task shines through every phase of this monumental work.

HAROLD A. WILLIAMS
Baltimore

Daniel Willard and Progressive Management on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. By David M. Vrooman. Historical Perspectives on Business Enterprise Series. (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1991. Pp. xvi, 218. Notes, index. \$42.50.)

Despite its broad title, this book centers only on the formation of labor policies on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O) under President Daniel Willard between 1910 and 1941. The author argues that Willard's leadership created an important, unusual corporate culture of labor-management cooperation that altered and established patterns of behavior lasting for a half century.

The results were significant for a company that at the century's turn was a weak third (behind the Pennsylvania and New York Central railroads) among the nation's eastern trunk-line systems. Vrooman describes the outcome as Daniel Willard's "postponing decline or averting disaster in an environment of generally diminishing prospects" (p. xiii). Willard's concern for doing the right thing, his interest in workers' well being, and his faith in the harmony of enterprise and laborers came naturally to a man whose uncommon career (for a railroad executive) included almost a decade as a blue-collar worker with union membership before rising steadily through the managerial ranks to become president of the troubled B&O in 1910 at the age of forty-nine.

In order to establish a family identity during the 1910s, Willard wasted no time in committing the B&O to an array of corporate welfare policies, including an athletic program, employee outings, a safety campaign, and a company magazine. Although such efforts were neither innovative nor rare for the period, Willard's unusual acceptance of railroad unions led in the 1920s to a second, more radical program, the Cooperative Plan, which established joint labor-management efforts to improve operation and maintenance. Co-sponsored by the B&O and its unions in the American Federation of Labor, the plan focused on a decentralized system of shop committees with members from lower-level management (who chaired the bodies) and a majority representing the involved craft unions. Appearing first in the repair shops of the mechanical department and subsequently (and less successfully) in the maintenance-of-way and conducting-transportation departments, such committees met frequently and regularly to hear and act on workers' suggestions (excluding labor grievances) to better performance and productivity. Between 1924 and 1927 suggestions averaged 529 monthly and were handled quickly and with a surprisingly high (86 percent) acceptance rate.

Although the program stagnated in the next decade, it clearly prefigured the quality circles adopted by American management in the 1970s and 1980s from Japanese and European competition, and it led naturally to a third phase, the Cooperative Traffic Program of the 1930s. Facing the Great Depression with an unusually high fixed-debt burden, the B&O scrambled desperately for more traffic to stave off bankruptcy. In response Willard authorized a small staff to head a corporate-wide program that stimulated, tabulated, and publicized employee recruitment of passengers and freight shipments from among friends, acquaintances, storekeepers, and other contacts. When Daniel Willard retired in 1941, the

Cooperative Traffic Program, the Cooperative Plan, and the welfare programs had established a strong culture of labor-management cooperation.

The study's narrow focus makes it most suitable for academicians and their libraries. That audience will certainly appreciate the writer's careful framing of questions, detailed documentation, and perceptive use of evidence, but it will find somewhat strained his interpretation that "better than any other man in his industry and in his time, and arguably as well as anyone in any industry and in any time, [Daniel Willard] showed how to lead a company" (p. 183). In fact, the book demonstrates that Willard's role was often one of response and support rather than initiation and innovation. The company's welfare policies duplicated those of many other firms, and the Cooperative Plan was initiated by William Johnston, president of the International Association of Machinists, and Otto Beyer, an efficiency expert and union consultant. Actual administration fell to Beyer and to the B&O's operating vice president, Charles Galloway, who was somewhat hostile to the plan. Willard's direct role in promoting and sustaining the program is uncertain because in the absence of his internal correspondence, the sources for his actions are largely public, printed materials.

The case for actual results is similarly thin. The Cooperative Plan had high participation rates, but the index measuring its bottom-line impact shows the railroad's first big jump in 1923, the year prior to full implementation. In the 1930s the Cooperative Traffic Program added only about 1 percent to total revenues. These caveats aside, however, scholars will appreciate this detailed study of labor-management relations, a topic often slighted in business histories.

CHARLES W. CHEAPE
Loyola College

Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Life. By Joan D. Hedrick. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. Pp. xix, 5507. \$35.)

Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe, published in 1852, and *Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, published the following year, represent major milestones in American literary, political, and cultural history.

The novel, translated into innumerable languages and adapted to the stage (against its author's initial reservations), fueled the debate over the need to abolish slavery and pricked the conscience of the divided nation. The abolitionist press hailed it as persuasive and truthful. Southerners found it necessary to rail against it in print, and to re-read it furtively in the privacy of their parlors even in the midst of the ensuing Civil War (Mary Chesnut is the best known example).

The plots of the novel are well known. The successful escape of Eliza and her family to freedom in Canada paralleled the trials and tribulations of the Christ figure Uncle Tom who bears his cross of slavery until death frees him from the reach of Simon Legree's whip. These are story lines familiar to most Americans and in many other countries from Thailand (see *The King and I*) to Germany (where the most recent film version had its debut).

There is no evidence that President Lincoln ever read the novel (the vast majority of its readers were women, North and South), but when faced with having to meet with Mrs. Stowe at the request of a U.S. Senator, he borrowed the "Key" from the Library of Congress to see how truthful Mrs. Stowe had thought she had been. Indeed, after their meeting, the Stowe family would proudly relate a story Mrs. Stowe never did, that President Lincoln extended 'his great hand' in welcome with the greeting "So this is the little woman who wrote the book that made this big war!" [Lyman Beecher Stowe, *Saints, Sinners and Beechers*, New York: Blue Ribbon Books, 1934, p. 205.]

To understand the brilliance of Harriet Beecher Stowe (most often referred to as "Mrs Stowe") and the importance of what would prove to be her masterpiece, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, to the history of American culture, no one should fail to read the new biography by Joan D. Hedrick.

Although at times tedious in her writing, Professor Hedrick brings Mrs. Stowe and her world to life, helping the reader to understand how this most brilliant of Lyman Beecher's children managed to overcome the male-dominated Victorian world and establish herself as the most popular American novelist of her day, even while struggling with the subservient domestic role of wife to a scholar who always managed to be away at the most critical junctures in the history of their family. In 398 pages Dr. Hedrick touches on almost every aspect of Mrs. Stowe's long life (1811-1896), including her move to the urban frontier of Cincinnati, Ohio, where she and her family fought a losing battle against the slave world that existed just across the river in Kentucky. With the retreat to the security of Maine and the capturing of her Cincinnati experiences in what would become *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe released decades of pent-up concern and hostility towards the horrors of an institution she had witnessed firsthand. Professor Hedrick handles the process by which Mrs. Stowe became a writer well, placing it into the historical context of her personal life and of the world about her.

Indeed, Professor Hedrick makes it clear that Harriet was almost overwhelmed by the standard medical practices of the day and might never have risen to such literary heights if she had not found the resources to take a water cure that restored her health and set her back on the track of writing for profit. It is also of more than passing interest that, not to be out-done, husband Calvin decided to take the cure himself, shortly after Harriet, leaving her, as was often the case, once again to manage the family on her own.

It is in the reconstruction of how an intelligent woman in a well-educated household makes her way despite the obstacles placed in her path by the male world that Professor Hedrick makes a major contribution to women's history and the rethinking of the role of women in American history generally. The growing affluence of the American middle class in the 1840s and 1850s made possible some leisure reading time for American women, and created a market for the parlor literature of which Mrs. Stowe was a master. That demand allowed her to juggle the management of the household with the writing of articles for pay, and that in time led her to undertake the serialization of the ultimate antislavery novel. What

Professor Hedrick fails to make fully clear, however, is the degree to which the freedom to write depended upon another kind of slavery and the reinforcement of class structure, the slavery of domestic help. There is little in the biography that documents how much of the free time that Mrs. Stowe had to write was provided by a succession of hired women ("help" and "servant") as well as some, like Anna Smith, who stayed for some considerable time. Without access to the money necessary to pay someone else to do her domestic chores, there is a good chance that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* would never have been written.

Another aspect of the complex world and life of Harriet Beecher Stowe that Professor Hedrick does not explore fully is the manner in which the power of the novel was transformed into an integral aspect of popular culture, first by the theater and then, not long after Mrs. Stowe's death, the motion picture. It is a transformation that did not necessarily capture either the spirit or the intent of the original novel, yet helps to explain how successfully Mrs. Stowe had aroused the interest of her readers in coming to grips with the great American shame: the institution of slavery.

It is as a stage production that Uncle Tom, Simon Legree, Little Eva, Topsy, Miss Ophelia, Marie St. Clare, and Augustine St. Clare entered the popular imagination and contributed so stridently to the formation of enduring stereotypes of African Americans, New England do-gooders, and Southern whites. Mrs. Stowe early on realized her mistake in not helping bring her novel to the stage and subsequently wrote the stage version of her not-so-successful next novel "Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp."

What is remarkable is that the stage version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was made not only palatable to Southern audiences, but played to full houses in Baltimore and St. Louis in the late 1850s. How this could happen, given the faithful manner in which the script of the first productions in Troy, New York, followed the book, in part explains how Americans of all sections chose to cope with the moral dilemma slavery posed. Northern audiences allowed it to confirm their views of the evils of slavery (although not without increasing emphasis on spectacular scenes that had little to do with the book). Southern audiences, with the help of the Baltimore impresario, John Owens, delighted on the other hand in the trivialization of the message—with Owens himself in blackface playing a comic Uncle Tom. Professor Hedrick would have done well to reflect on the work of Tom Bogar for example, whose dissertation explains how Owens brought the Howard family's New York production of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to Baltimore in 1855, the first ever south of the Mason-Dixon line. Owens made it abundantly clear to George Howard, the father of Cordelia Howard, who had originated the part of Little Eva, and played little else the rest of her career, that the play would have to be "softened in its style . . . so that the VERY OBJECTIONABLE speeches and situations could be modified in their tone and spirit . . ."

The Howards did as they were asked. When on 16 April 1856 *Uncle Tom's Cabin* opened at the Charles Street theater in Baltimore, it was an instant success. According to Mrs. Owens, the town went "wild with delight and admiration; this success retrieved the heavy losses of the season. [Demonstrating] no sectional

feeling in regard to the play . . . Baltimoreans accepted it as given, packed the house, and thus filled the hitherto attenuated treasury."

If the book could be ameliorated in the public conscience by its trivialization on the stage, the novel itself would continue to be a vehicle for waging battle against the institution of slavery. In 1857, Samuel Green, a fifty-five-year-old free Negro from Dorchester County, Maryland, was sentenced to ten years in prison on the sole charge that he possessed a copy of an abolitionist tract entitled *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Green remained in the state penitentiary in Baltimore until the Civil War intervened and he was granted a pardon on the proviso that he would leave the state forever. The irony of his dilemma is compelling. Thousands flocked to the stage production of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* while he languished in jail for owning a copy of the book.

Despite the manner in which the characters of Mrs. Stowe's novel entered the imagination of the public at large, her prose continued to be used effectively in the battle to dismantle the institution of slavery. Mrs. Stowe and husband Calvin would live to see slavery abolished. The power of her prose has continued to influence both the political world and the world of literature up to the present. Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, for example, explores themes that were first raised by Mrs. Stowe through such characters as Cassy, while the debate of the meaning of Uncle Tom has been a matter of controversy and misinterpretation since the beginnings of the civil rights movement.

To place Mrs. Stowe and her contributions to American culture in perspective, biographical efforts are a necessity. Anyone interested in the origins and aftermath of the Civil War should read *Harriet Beecher Stowe, A Life*, as should anyone interested in understanding the long and arduous process by which women in America have struggled to achieve recognition of their rightful status as co-equals in the continuing saga of what an American is, and what an American ought to be.

EDWARD C. PAPENFUSE

Maryland State Archives

Guide to Research in Baltimore City and County. By Robert Barnes. Second edition. (Westminster, Md.: Family Line Publications, 1993. Pp. x, 151. Appendices, index. \$20.)

This second edition of the *Guide to Research in Baltimore City and County* contains several new features over the first. Robert Barnes added new material to the sections on church, land, military, and immigration and naturalization records. He included a section on Baltimore City funeral homes and updated various bibliographies throughout the text. Barnes deleted three of the appendices of the first edition which dealt with the Maryland State Archives (since they now have new guides to their holdings). The appendices now consist of: a reprint of Matthews' *Counties of Maryland*, research sources at the Maryland Historical Society and genealogical sources at the Peabody Library, articles from *The Archivists' Bulldog*, and a map of cemeteries in Baltimore City in 1806. A five-page general index follows the appendices.

This is a very detailed and thoughtfully composed resource tool. Mr. Barnes took care to pack as much information into the text as one can without overwhelming the researchers with too many lists. If there are faults, they are minor. This work does not have a lot of narrative. There are times when a little more historical background would be helpful (if nothing more than simply to satisfy the curious). For example, on dealing with the erstwhile political subdivisions known as "hundreds" he writes: "There are several theories for the origin of this term; suffice it to say it referred to a specific geographic locality with defined boundaries" (p. 112). The genealogist in me does not much care what the "hundreds" actually stood for; however, the historian in me does.

A second area of frustration is that there are bibliographic references that are only hinted at but not defined. Consider for instance a reference to passenger lists: "One of the most helpful finding aids to the origins of Pennsylvania settlers is found at the York County Historical Society" (p. 90). He gives us nothing more, and one can envision people inquiring at the York County Historical Society for this anonymous finding aid. Another example of a dangling reference is in reference to land records: "These have been abstracted by Robert A. Oszakiewski of the Maryland State Archives, and published in a recent article in the *Maryland Genealogical Society Bulletin*" (p. 91). Mr. Barnes does not name the article or state in which issue it was published. If it is important enough to mention in passing, it should be important enough to supply the appropriate bibliographic information.

These two criticisms aside, this is a wonderful book, packed with lots of helpful information. The listings of the various wards and the accompanying maps are extremely useful to those who have an address but need the ward information (perhaps for further census research). One can go on and on describing the useful aspects Robert Barnes included in this text: archives, libraries and repositories; cemeteries; church records and histories; city directories; communities and neighborhood histories; ethnic histories; family histories, genealogies and biographies; historic houses and other structures; immigration and naturalization; newspapers; place names . . . and the list continues.

This text is recommended for genealogical collections and also for the individual who has ancestors from Baltimore City and County. This is a detailed and encompassing undertaking.

LEE ARNOLD

Historical Society of Pennsylvania

American Indian Lacrosse, Little Brother of War: A Comprehensive Study of the Origins and History of this Native American Game. By Thomas Vennum, Jr. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994. 360 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index, notes. \$45 cloth; \$17 paper.)

After more than four hundred years, the game of lacrosse finally has received proper recognition by a learned scholar who had a sincere desire to credit the North American Indians, the game's originators.

The author, a senior ethnomusicologist at the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies, traces the source of much of the folklore of lacrosse and has dispelled some myths and perpetuated others. For example, he found that the Indian version of lacrosse, despite its image of savagery in the minds of most lacrosse enthusiasts, did have officials, rules, and penalties. Through vigilant and painstaking research, including interviews with past and present Indian lacrosse players and other authorities, the author documents what had been Indian oral records passed on through generations. Vennum closely examined many tribal studies by historians and anthropologists.

The author's interest in Native American music led to his discovery that the carvings on the ends of Chippewa tribe drumsticks resembled the carvings at the butt end of a Cayuga tribe hickory lacrosse stick. His interest piqued, Vennum then examined and decoded the carvings on hundreds of lacrosse sticks, attempting to find clues about the place lacrosse held in American Indian culture. He discovered variations that separate Indian lacrosse into three regions: Iroquois in the northeast area of what is now the United States, including some southern Canadian territory; the southeast part of America; and the Great Lakes area of Canada along with some adjacent portions of the U.S.

To understand the Indian game one must enter a world of spiritual belief and magic. The game often served as a surrogate for war and to settle territorial disputes. The author also points out that Native Americans still continue a long-running tradition of burying heralded players with their lacrosse sticks. One of the marvelous fables of the game, the Fort Michilimackinac massacre, is graphically described with a detailed modern drawing attempting to illustrate the authenticity of the deliberately planned Indian treachery.

Several of the chapters are narrative fiction which try to bring the Indian world of lacrosse to vivid life, while the rest are anthropological and historical in nature. There are impressive illustrations throughout the book, including ancient Indian lacrosse sticks and action photos of rituals, many rarely seen by the public in general.

The author gives particular emphasis to Dr. W. George Beers, a Canadian who, in the mid-1800s, began codifying the existing rules and advancing his proposed rules in hope they would stabilize for modern lacrosse the erratic nature of the sport. Beers became an outstanding lacrosse player himself, strongly advocating that his club teammates cease tobacco use, as he felt it affected players' lungs, putting them at a disadvantage, particularly against Indians.

An admitted lacrosse fanatic, Beers had legislation introduced in Canada's Parliament in 1867 to declare lacrosse the national game of Canada. The author fails to point out that the attempt was shelved. Instead he perpetuates the myth that lacrosse reigned as Canada's national game, a myth which persisted for more than 125 years, even in such respected references as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. In fact, it was not until 27 April 1994, after fourteen members of Parliament spoke, that Canada voted to confirm lacrosse as the nation's national summer game and ice hockey as its national winter game.

The Indian belief that the white man absconded with their native game, excluding them from the white man's playing fields, is fully documented. Indians take lacrosse more seriously than many Americans take baseball.

With imagination, the author intermixes a variety of oral narrative histories with facts and skillfully weaves the origins of Indian lacrosse with the game as altered by the white man. He animatedly discusses the role Native American women historically played in the game. Interestingly, Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy send a team to compete in the Olympics of lacrosse, the quadrennially held International Lacrosse Federation World Championship, played this year in Manchester, England.

Vennum's thoroughly entertaining study is intended for lacrosse buffs, players, scholars, or anyone interested in this phase of Native American culture.

DONALD FRITZ

Lacrosse Foundation and Hall of Fame

Pillars of Salt: An Anthology of Early American Criminal Narratives. Edited by Daniel E. Williams. (Madison, Wis.: Madison House, 1993. Pp. xvi, 369. \$32.95.)

The American public's fascination with crime reporting, especially the personal recounting of misdeeds by those convicted, is scarcely a new phenomenon. The literary genre of criminal confessionals actually originated in the late seventeenth century. Daniel E. Williams, a professor of English at the University of Mississippi, examines this popular literary form and provides an interesting anthology of twenty narratives dating from 1699 through the end of the next century. These narratives are among the first widely read publications, apart from an extensive sermon literature, written by colonists and printed in the New World. They achieved a level of extraordinary popularity alongside the narratives of Indian captives, with which they share much in common. Serious scholarly attention has already illuminated this other narrative form, and Williams's work is now a welcomed addition to our understanding of such popular early American literary genres.

The first criminal narratives appeared in ministers' execution sermons published in New England. In a society experiencing the stresses of increasing secularization and challenges to authority, ministers found the spiritual crises of individuals confronting execution, particularly in the instances of repentance and conversion, highly effective in reenforcing among the populace desired norms of behavior and respect for authority. Quickly, the form evolved to have the criminals personally narrate their dilemmas and the virtues of their gallows' conversion as an encouragement to others. Transcribers, usually still ministers, in numerous ways carefully shaped these accounts which increasingly adhered to a predictable, prescribed form.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the genre again evolved, Williams argues, with "a change in the narrative focus from the criminal's spiritual state after condemnation to his or her crimes before condemnation," and while they "still followed the fall, repentance, humiliation, and redemption pattern . . . they exhibited a much greater concern for the imagination than they did for the

conscience" (p. 13). Printers gradually assumed more influence over the genre than did ministers, and in response to readers' interest and demands, the accounts of crimes became more detailed, lurid and sensational. *The American Bloody Register*, published in Boston in 1784, became the first attempt at a criminal magazine and a forerunner of today's tabloids. Melodrama abounded, and criminals in these narratives became less likely than their predecessors fully to have reconciled their souls with their Lord before execution.

Williams makes many interesting observations about the narratives themselves and their subjects. This genre appeared almost exclusively in New England and the mid-Atlantic colonies. Indeed, he found only one printed in the South, in Charleston in 1766, and only one based solely in the South, but it was published in London and intended primarily for an English audience; neither of these two is included in this volume. A few of the anthologized narratives do have subjects who resided briefly in southern areas. For example, Francis Personel was an Irish servant under indenture in Maryland for a period before he committed a murder in New York. Crime was certainly not less prevalent in Maryland and colonies further South. It is disappointing that Williams does not speak further to this regional difference in ministers' and publishers' approaches to executions and crimes and possibly to differences in readers' tastes as well.

In the early examples of these narratives, as was true of executions in general, the individuals had been convicted of crimes against persons, most commonly murder. By the era of the American Revolution, however, society was increasingly alarmed by crimes against property, and thieves, burglars, and counterfeiters become more prevalent among those being executed. Williams stresses that these criminals were usually young persons, outsiders without appreciable benefit of birth or other favorable circumstances. Indeed, in the narratives reproduced, blacks, Indians, and Irish predominate, and the reader is struck by the extent to which members of these groups closely interacted with each other. These criminals also seem to travel more extensively than did most colonists. Four of the narratives address female criminals, three of whom were convicted of murdering their illegitimate babies, while the last was executed in 1789 for robbery. Their stories provide glimpses into women's lives not frequently found in more traditional historical sources.

Few readers, in turning from the sixty-three-page scholarly introduction to the narratives themselves, will want to read them consecutively. The redundancy of this formulaic genre quickly becomes tiresome; however, these narratives do repay a careful reading and provide instructive and provocative windows into the respective periods and events. Williams helpfully follows each narrative with notes that speak to the publication in question and other available information about the crime itself. Here one gains further insight into the ways in which these persons and events were carefully shaped toward the ends of the ministers and printers who in turn were so instrumental in developing and promoting this literary genre.

DAVID W. JORDAN
Austin College

Die Korrespondenz Heinrich Melchior Muhlenbergs aus der Anfangszeit des Deutschen Luthertums in Nordamerika. Band 4: 1769–1776. Edited by Kurt Aland with Beate Koster and Karl-Otto Strohmidel. (Berlin and New York: Walter De Gruyter Press, 1990. Pp. xvi, 773. Index of names and places, index of letters. DM 468.)

The fourth volume of the Muhlenberg correspondence continues the tradition set by the three preceding ones edited by Kurt Aland and his collaborators on the project, Beate Koster and Karl-Otto Strohmidel (for a description of the general organization of the *Korrespondenz*, see the review in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 87 (1992): 224–26). Volume 4 stands out, however, in several respects. It is the last installment of Muhlenberg's correspondence which Kurt Aland, the founder and director of this important project, oversaw in its entirety before his death in the spring of 1994. Hopefully, the series can be completed without major difficulties and changes or undue delays. Publication of the correspondence in Muhlenberg's final years is especially desirable since the recent reprinting of the *Journals of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg* and the publication of first volume of the translation of the *Muhlenberg Correspondence* by Helmut T. Lehmann and John W. Kleiner provide scholars and interested lay persons now with relative easy access to important complementary materials—in English and much of it superbly cross referenced—about the beginnings of Lutheranism in North America.

Other noteworthy characteristics of volume 4 pertain to its content. It supersedes the earlier volumes in terms of the diversity of its subject matter and correspondents, which is a sign for Muhlenberg's continued activity and leadership in the expansion of Lutheranism well beyond Pennsylvania and the adjoining colonies (see for example the listing of congregations, pp. 279–80). It also marks significant change among Muhlenberg's superiors in the mother church in Germany while in America several indicators point to a critical and largely generational shift from the founding Lutheran missionaries among German immigrants to the ministers of the maturing and eventually independent German Lutheran Church in the United States. In addition, the volume covers the beginning of the American Revolution with very few reports and direct comments, since Muhlenberg was convinced that ministers should not get involved in political affairs and he seemed deeply disturbed, even depressed, by the armed conflict which he viewed as an expression of God's wrath.

Among the more than two hundred letters, Maryland figures regularly, albeit not prominently, in Muhlenberg's correspondence in 1769–1776. With the expansion of Lutheranism, Muhlenberg and his colleagues were called upon to supply ever more congregations with ministers and also to arbitrate in cases of misunderstandings and conflicting interests between pastors and their often factious flocks. Three congregations in Maryland (Frederick [listed under Frederick Town in the index], Baltimore, and Conococheague) applied to Philadelphia for regular ministers (one example is the call of the Reverend J. A. Krug to Frederick on pp. 280–82). Frederick and Baltimore, moreover, were among the unruly and divided congregations and therefore received Muhlenberg's attention and advice (especially pp. 168–70, 220–24). Ministers, elders, and leaders who figure prominently in these disagreements

and disputes are readily identified in the index as are the names of the congregations, which allows the reader to follow the development of Lutheranism in Maryland.

MARIANNE S. WOKECK

Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis

Rebel Rivers, A Guide to Civil War Sites on the Potomac, Rappahannock, York and James.

By Mark Nesbitt. (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1993. Pp. ix, 148. Appendices, index, bibliography. \$12.95 paper.)

In this pleasant little nautical tour guide, author Mark Nesbitt encourages readers to experience the water-related sites of the Civil War. This book shares common traits with similar tour guides such as James I. "Bud" Robertson's *Civil War Sites in Virginia, A Tour Guide*, and Alice H. Cromie's *A Tour Guide to the Civil War*. Nesbitt's unique feature is to locate and interpret these sites in relation to the waterways that were so vital in that conflict. Many of the names and places he describes are familiar: Harpers Ferry on the Potomac, Fredericksburg on the Rappahannock, McClellan's and Grant's operations on the York and the James. Others may be more obscure, such as McCoy's Ferry, Port Royal, White House, and Deep Bottom, but all of them were important points in the Civil War usage of these rivers. For the purists who would challenge the completeness of his title, Nesbitt justifies it by covering many of the tributaries to these rivers. Streams such as Antietam Creek, the Chickahominy, Pamunkey, Appomattox and Mattaponi rivers are included, as well as the important sites along them.

Rebel Rivers seems to pursue twin objectives: one is to stress the importance of rivers to the logistical, strategic and tactical aspects of the war, and second to give directions from land and water to find the more important sites today. It is refreshing to see such emphasis placed on the logistical aspect of Civil War campaigns. The importance of water supply routes being superior to rail is eloquently stressed throughout Nesbitt's narrative. Nesbitt's location of sites by water is usually done by buoy numbers, although he always counsels consulting with the Coast Guard and local authorities for complete directions.

Nesbitt's narrative weaves the major campaigns of the war into the sites mentioned in his book. In some places his assessment of the war and its relation to the sites in his book gets a bit tangled. For the most part, Mr. Nesbitt's reputation as an author has been founded on books written about the battle of Gettysburg. Even though Gettysburg is many miles from any navigable stream, the author does manage to include several references to the battle into his text. His coverage of other areas however, is less than thorough in places. Kelly's Ford on the Rappahannock is mentioned only as the site of Major Pelham's death, and Aquia Creek only as part of Grant's 1864 Overland Campaign. Cumberland and Eltham's Landings, which in addition to White House were also supply bases on the York River, are not mentioned at all. Awkward sentence structure and errors frequently mar the description and narrative of some of the places he does cover. In many places the

author seems to begin a discussion of various aspects of the war, only to abruptly shift to another topic.

These mistakes tend to be toward the end of the book, as though there was a hurry to finish it. However it is hard to overlook assertions such as “only *seven percent* of the population in the South owned slaves” (p. 96), and Grant intending “to maneuver Lee and his army of Northern Virginia away from *Washington*” and “Butler began his campaign against the Confederate capital and Petersburg on May 6, which would culminate in the *battle of Fort Stevens*” (p. 110). Clearly the reader should rely on this book more for locating river-related Civil War sites than for accurate descriptions of their historical significance.

Despite its short-comings, *Rebel Rivers* is a useful and entertaining book for Civil War and boating enthusiasts, especially for those who want to combine their hobbies. Even if the reader must travel by road rather than water, Nesbitt offers a new format for visiting important sites where America’s greatest conflict took place.

THOMAS G. CLEMENS
Hagerstown Junior College

Gettysburg—Culp’s Hill and Cemetery Hill. By Harry W. Pfanz. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993. Pp. xix, 507. Notes, appendices, photos, maps, bibliography, index. \$37.50.)

Few place names stir American imagination as does Gettysburg. If it is accurate to say that the Civil War has generated far more prolific literature than other historical topics, then it can be asserted with equal force that Gettysburg’s three-day struggle has prompted by far the greatest level of scholarship within its genre. Extraordinary documentation and participant commemoration have undoubtedly made this possible. Typifying the national epic, “Pickett’s Charge” on the third day is routinely showcased as the high-water mark of Confederate endeavor, when in fact the second day’s action cemented the armies into place from which one or the other would inevitably recoil after a prolonged.

With its complexities frequently muddled or oversimplified, Harry Pfanz has embraced the Herculean task of dissecting, documenting, and defining this crucial second day on strategic, tactical, and command levels. His first installment embraced the savage see-saw grapple south of town on the federal left flank, without question a watershed battle treatise (*Gettysburg—The Second Day* [University of North Carolina Press, 1987]). This, his second and concluding offering, upholds previous standards in focusing on the two eminences that riveted the right flank—the bend and barb of the “fish hook” line—a setting that closely mirrors the southerly fight in crucial significance. However, unlike the contest for Little Round Top and environs, his examination of Culp’s Hill and Cemetery Hill vividly illustrates the cramped, virtually claustrophobic character of the fighting where a predominantly rocky, wooded landscape frequently furnished Confederate attackers visual and ballistic concealment in their approach to the coveted high ground.

Indistinct at the best of times, this vexing landscape and the troops who stubbornly traversed it are delineated in logical, easy to understand terms. The book's excellent maps perfectly compliment a well-crafted text. This reviewer knows of no more thorough tactical presentation, finding many previously held concepts to be in error. Pfanz's principal command antagonists ring true in character, action and reaction revealing the dramatic nature of this portion of the field.

From a strictly Maryland viewpoint, the grapple atop Culp's Hill warrants special notice when the 1st Maryland Eastern Shore Infantry (U.S.) resolutely repelled the vaunted 1st (2nd) Maryland Battalion (C.S.), echoing another confrontation a year earlier at Front Royal where the result was just the reverse. Here on Culp's Hill we uncover a rare, legitimate example of the often tiresome brother-against-brother cliché (pp. 314–15, 321). Considering the state's forced adherence to the Union, episodes such as this should be standard fare in every Maryland classroom.

There are undoubtedly those who argue (perhaps rightly) that entirely too much emphasis is placed on Gettysburg. Much of its historiography is redundant, distracting, and overblown. Shoving its way assertively to the fore, Pfanz's twin surveys of the second day fully justify themselves by merit of depth and ample scholarship. The latest volume would ably serve as a model for future studies of equally significant engagements. This book should by all means be kept side by side with the first, freeing up shelf space ordinarily occupied by other, now obsolete studies.

Add Coddington's *Gettysburg: A Study in Command* (Scribner's, 1984), supplemented by a handful of complimentary works, one can confidently say that the campaign is well in hand. But Pfanz's effort will stand as the definitive, referential examination of the true high-water mark of Confederate field operations, hopefully in parting from the Gettysburg preoccupation. This much accomplished, perhaps the stage is now fairly set to re-examine in comparable length and detail the more pivotal Confederate political and diplomatic high-water mark in Missouri, Kentucky and, most significantly, in west central Maryland during September 1862, an occasion that offered palpable national independence that had long since evaporated by the time offensive options did likewise on Gettysburg's memorable second day.

TIMOTHY J. REESE
Burkittsville

The Gettysburg Soldier's Cemetery and Lincoln's Address. By Frank L. Klement. (Shippensburg, Pa.: White Mane Publishing Co., 1993. Pp. xv, 276. Illustrations, appendices, notes, index. \$30.)

Professor Klement's reputation as a Lincoln scholar is well known. For the first time, his essays concerning perhaps the most defining moments of Lincoln's Civil War experience are gathered into one volume. Klement has written extensively on various aspects of the creation of the Soldier's National Cemetery at Gettysburg in 1863, and also Lincoln's famous Gettysburg address. Many of the essays encompassed in this book have been published in Lincoln-interest periodicals. White Mane

has gathered these essays together, included some new material, and offered this as a compilation of the author's work in this field. Nowhere else can one find such detailed description of virtually every aspect of this important event.

The book is divided into four parts, the first three consisting of the previously published essays. Part one covers the stories of three principals in creating the cemetery and planning the ceremony. David Wills, the energetic Gettysburg lawyer, Ward Hill Lamon and Benjamin B. French, two trusted Lincoln subordinates, have their actions ably narrated. Part two offers an essay on Ohio's part in these ceremonies, and an essay on Lincoln's impromptu speech on the evening of 18 November. Lincoln's Gettysburg address itself is the topic of part three. In one of the four essays Klement, who in no sense approaches the intellectual energy of Garry Wills in *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words that Re-Made America* (Simon & Schuster, 1992) presents evidence to refute the myths that Lincoln wrote his speech hastily while traveling to Gettysburg, and also that it was written on the back of an envelope. He also shows conclusively that the speech was well received, and with enthusiastic applause. Other essays cover first-hand accounts of men who were on the platform with Lincoln and participated in the ceremony. Part four consists of three new essays on a variety of topics. Here Klement skillfully examines the six surviving copies of the Gettysburg Address, including the controversy over the authenticity of one of the copies. He also details the argument about the exact location of the platform erected for the dedication ceremony and describes the music and musicians present for the ceremony. It is worth mentioning that one of the featured events was an ode sung by members of the National Union Musical Association of Baltimore.

The strength of this book is its detailed and well-documented research. Almost all of the essays are voluminously footnoted, and the appendices include the full text of the other featured speaker's remarks at the dedication ceremony. Another strength is part four, the essays written for this book. Klement's essay detailing the six extant copies of Lincoln's remarks is remarkable for the controversy surrounding the provenance of the "reading copy" allegedly held by Lincoln during the ceremony. Although Klement clearly sides with those who accept the document as genuine, he quite fairly presents the critic's point of view. Likewise, his treatment of the issue of where the original stand was placed in the cemetery lets the reader know what Klement believes but still allows the reader to see all the evidence.

Where the book could be improved is in the editing. Many of the essays in parts one through three are repetitive; similar or identical quotes, phrases and details are presented again and again. Obviously the author penned these articles at different times for different magazines and thus cannot be blamed, but too many times the reader is presented with material that is all too familiar from the previous essay. Many of the same sources are used to tell similar stories, thus little new information is introduced after the first few essays.

After reading this work the reader will be intimately familiar with the people who played key roles in creating and dedicating the Soldier's National Cemetery at Gettysburg. Many might never have heard of Pennsylvania governor Andrew

Curtin, David Wills, Ward Hill Lamon, and others, but their efforts have been appreciated by millions people since 1863. Were it not for the efforts of these three men, and many others, the world would never have received Lincoln's immortal Gettysburg Address. Here in this book is the greatest collection of information of how it all was created.

THOMAS G. CLEMENS

Keedysville

Voices of D-Day: The Story of the Allied Invasion Told by Those Who Were There. Edited by Ronald J. Drez. Foreword by Stephen E. Ambrose. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994. Pp. xvi, 310. \$24.95.)

Few events of modern times have been written about as extensively as the story of D-Day. The invasion and the ensuing campaign have been analyzed and portrayed from every conceivable angle. *Voices of D-Day* is part of the telling by the individuals who were there, and their memories are clear and fresh and compelling.

The book can be read as a stand-alone volume or as a companion piece to the many narrative accounts of the invasion. *Voices* had its origins in the work of Stephen E. Ambrose, founder of the Eisenhower Center at the University of New Orleans. The Center's assistant director and the editor of *Voices*, Ronald J. Drez, conducted the interviews (over 1,400) of D-Day veterans that form the book's content.

For the most part, Mr. Drez lets the veterans speak directly, only interspersing brief contextual material to orient the reader to a particular sequence of events or to identify various locales of the described action. Culling out and deciding which "voices" to hear must have been an arduous task, but Mr. Drez has done an admirable, judicious job in his selections. The chapters are intelligently arranged, with most of the book's space devoted to the airborne assault and to the landings.

After setting the stage of enlistment through training in the first four chapters, from "Signing Up" to "Plans and Execution," Mr. Drez then devotes thirteen chapters to the fighting, as told from the perspectives of airmen, paratroopers, commandos, naval personnel, and soldiers. Quite appropriately, salient parts of the invasion are singled out so that the reader is not confused by a random series of unconnected events.

Two chapters stand out: "The Bridge Prangers" and "The 116th at Omaha Beach." The first is, perhaps, the most lucidly told of the many separate parts which make up the D-Day tale: the early morning seizure of key bridges on the flank of the British sector by the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Regiment of the 6th Airborne Division. Maj. John Howard is the chief narrator and he does a masterful job of description of the importance of his unit's objective, and of the pell-mell rush to grab and hold the Benouville Bridge.

The story of the 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Division, on Omaha Beach is difficult reading. It is a painful account of chaos, death, and destruction and of incredible heroism and fortitude. There is considerable repetition in the score of

interwoven remembrances. The repetition is necessary to bring home the full impact of what the initial assault companies faced.

The repetition also reminds one of how risky the whole invasion enterprise was. The issue remained very much in doubt and, looking back after fifty years, there is a grim awareness that it could have gone the other way. Without securing Omaha Beach, in the center of the landings areas, the invasion could have been more easily contained and repulsed. The ability of the soldiers of the 116th Regiment to claw their way ashore—and to stay ashore—is staggering.

There are, as mentioned earlier, many books on D-Day. Many use extensively the recollections of the participants on both sides. *Voices of D-Day* is a valuable addition to the battle's literature by offering an unadorned set of those recollections. It, therefore, is a book whose scope and design are, in one sense, quite modest. Because of that simplicity, however, it presents a vivid, memorable recasting of D-Day.

The book evokes many images. We see and feel D-Day through the words of those who were there. There is a sense of wonderment among many who were interviewed—that they survived to tell their story. Speaking of a specific incident but embracing the whole of 6 June 1944, Sgt. Bill Irving, 3rd Parachute Squadron, Royal Engineers, said, "It was a bit—what—*dodgy* would be the right word for it."

STEPHEN M. McCLAIN
Johns Hopkins University

Books Received

The Papers of Nathanael Greene is an ongoing publishing project for editors Richard K. Showman and Dennis M. Conrad. Volume 7 covers the dates 26 December 1780–29 March 1781, and includes references to John Eager Howard and the battle of Guilford Court House. Among his correspondents are James McHenry and George Washington.

University of North Carolina Press, \$70.00

The Library of Congress announces the publication of volume 21 of *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774–1789*. Covering the period from October 1783 to November 1784, the correspondence documents the experimental “Committee of the States” as well as difficulties in choosing a location for the federal capital.

Library of Congress, \$41.00

In 1972, Walter Lord offered a memorable recounting of the Battle of Baltimore in *The Dawn’s Early Light*. The Johns Hopkins University Press now offers this work in paperback form, as part of its Maryland Paperback Bookshelf Series.

The Johns Hopkins University Press, \$14.95

Fighting Men: A Chronicle of Three Black Civil War Soldiers, tells the tale of three black men who enter the army for different reasons but have similar experiences. Author John Zubritsky, a Marylander, addresses the problems of racism in army life as well as at home in this novel.

Branden Publishing Company, \$21.95

The University of Nebraska Press now presents a series of Bison Book Editions of previously published works which focus on the Civil War. These paperback volumes include *Mounted Raids of the Civil War* by Edward G. Longacre, *With Grant and Meade from the Wilderness to Appomattox* by Theodore Lyman, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third* by T. Harry Williams, and *The Night the War Was Lost* by Charles Dufour.

University of Nebraska Press, \$12.95–\$14.95

Choosing Truman: The Democratic Convention of 1944 is a critical study of the selection of Harry S. Truman as a running mate for Franklin D. Roosevelt in the presidential election of 1944. Author Robert H. Ferrell, who has written many books on Truman, explains why this man, who had no great ambition to become vice-president, was chosen.

University of Missouri Press, \$24.95

Notices

PARKER AND HARRIS GENEALOGY PRIZES ANNOUNCED

The Maryland Historical Society's Committee on Genealogy announces the winners of two prizes for the best Maryland-related genealogical works that were received by the society's library in 1993. The Sumner A. and Dudrea Parker Prize for the best work on Maryland families is awarded to Lucille A. Wallis, compiler of the multi-volume work, *Samuel Wallis of Kent County, Maryland: Some of His Descendants & Allied Families* (Baltimore, Maryland, 1991). The Norris Harris Prize for the best source book on Maryland is awarded to Robert W. Barnes for his new edition of *Guide to Research in Baltimore City and County* (Westminster, Maryland, 1993).

EDUCATION COMMITTEE ESSAY CONTEST WINNER

Joby Topper, a spring graduate of Frostburg State University, is the recipient of this year's \$250 undergraduate essay prize offered by the Education Committee of the Maryland Historical Society. His work is entitled "Lord Baltimore's Policy of Concession: The Surrender of Catholic Rights in Colonial Maryland." This essay contest is held annually and is open to college students. All entries must focus on a subject of Maryland history and make use of primary sources.

PENNSYLVANIA SCHOLARS-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission invites applications for its 1995-1996 scholars-in-residence program. This program provides support for full-time research and study at any of the facilities maintained by the commission for a period of four to twelve consecutive weeks between 1 May 1995 and 30 April 1996, at a rate of \$1,200 per month. The program is open to college and university affiliated scholars, professionals in history-related disciplines, writers, and others. Application deadline is 20 January 1995. For more information or to receive application materials, write to the Division of History, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Box 1026, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17108, or call (717) 787-3034.

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE HAGLEY FELLOWSHIPS

The Department of History at the University of Delaware offers two- and four-year fellowships for a course of study leading to an M.A. or Ph.D. degree for students interested in careers as college teachers or as professionals in museums, historical agencies, and archives. The Hagley Program focuses on the history of industrialization in the United States and elsewhere. Fellowships cover tuition for courses at the

University of Delaware and provide a yearly stipend. More information may be obtained by writing to the Coordinator, University of Delaware-Hagley Program, Department of History, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, 19716. The deadline for receipt of complete applications is 30 January 1995.

SPORT HISTORY CONFERENCE

The 23rd annual conference of the North American Society for Sport History will take place on 26-29 May 1995 in Long Beach, California. Anyone interested in presenting a paper or organizing a session should submit abstracts for review by 15 October 1994 to Nancy Struna, Department of Kinesiology, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742-2611. All participants must register for the conference and be members of NASSH.

BEYOND CONVENT WALLS

Cardinal Stritch College of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, will host *Beyond Convent Walls: Women Religious in Historical Context*. This conference will take place on 18-21 June 1995, and organizers welcome proposals. For more information, write to Florence Deacon, OSF, Department of History, Cardinal Stritch College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53217-3985.

LASTING LEGACIES AT THE DELAWARE ART MUSEUM

The Delaware Art Museum presents *Howard Pyle and Norman Rockwell: Lasting Legacies*, an exhibition tracing the careers of two of America's best-known illustrators. Organized jointly by the Delaware Art Museum and the Norman Rockwell Museum of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, the exhibit will feature drawings, paintings, and watercolors. *Lasting Legacies* opens 18 November 1994. For more information, call (302) 571-9590.

CORRECTION

Mr. Frederick C. Leiner's article in the fall 1993 *Maryland Historical Magazine*, "The Baltimore Merchants' Warships: Maryland and Patapsco in the Quasi-War with France," pp. 265-66, continues the error of stating that Lewis DeRochbrune of Fells Point probably arrived circa 1793 in Baltimore as a refugee from Toussaint's slave revolution in San Domingo. Lewis DeRochbrune of Fells Point was the son of Thomas DeRochbrune of Kent Island, Maryland, and the great-grandson of Dr. Lewis DeRochbrune, who settled on Kent Island by 1684. Louis was born circa 1764 and died in June 1802. Please refer to George B. Wilson's 1976 volume, *The Descendants of Dr. Lewis DeRochbrune of Queen Anne's County, Maryland*, pp. 27-28.

Maryland Picture Puzzle

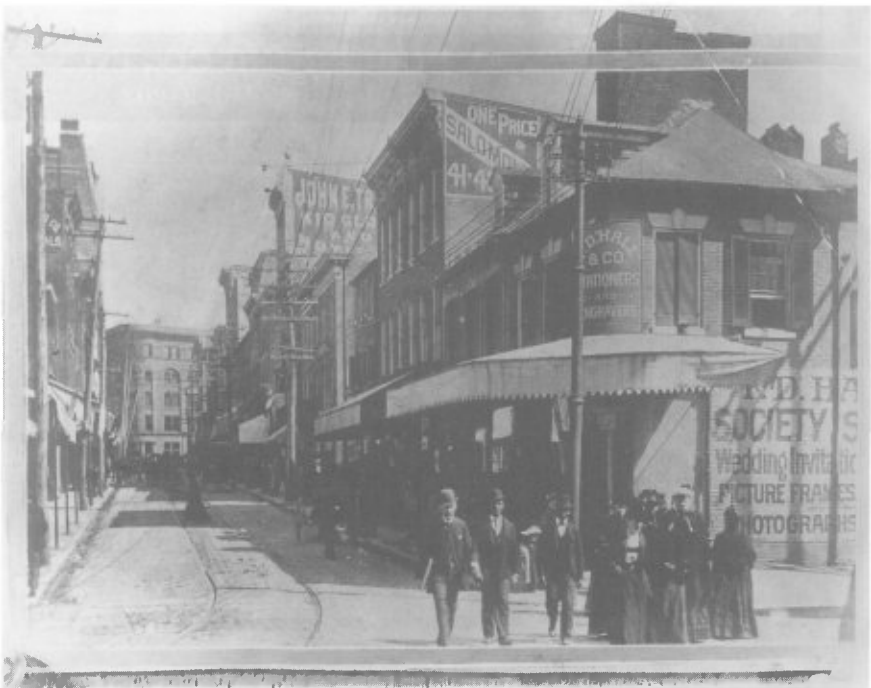
Test your knowledge of Baltimore history by identifying the location and the date of this street scene.

The summer 1994 Picture Puzzle depicts the Ship Cafe in Ocean City, located on 14th Street and the Sinpuxent Bay, 1940. The cafe was destroyed in the late 1970s by fire. The Harbour Island Community now occupies the site. The White Marlin Open is held there every August and attracts visitors from all over the world.

Our congratulations to Mr. William R. Cronin, Mr. William Hollifield, Mr. Christopher MacMurray, Mr. Raymond Martin, Mr. Percy Martin, Mr. M. Edward Shull and Mr. James Thomas Wollon, Jr., who correctly identified the spring 1994 Picture Puzzle. We apologize for an error in dating the spring Picture Puzzle of the Jacob Tome Institute. The photograph was taken in 1907 not circa 1915. Thank you.

Please send your answers to:

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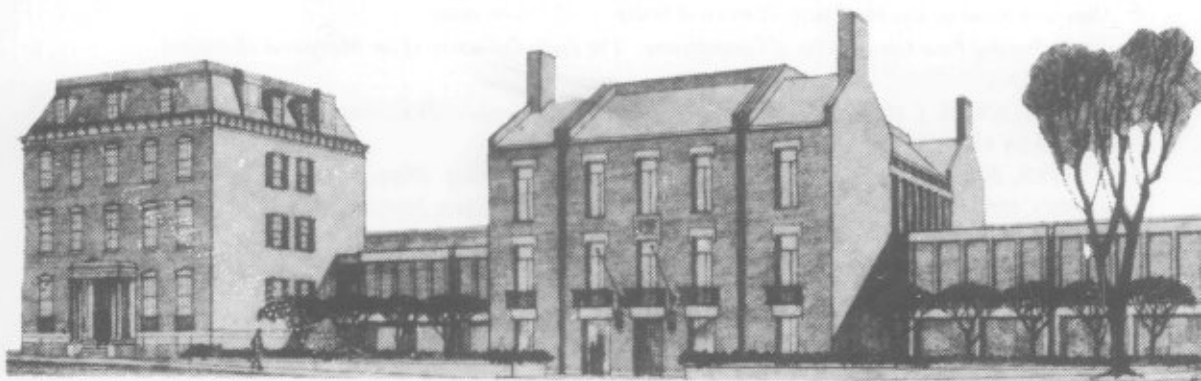
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